Florida CHESS

FLORIDA CHESS ASSOCIATION QUARTERLY PUBLICATION

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Jump for Joy! It's a National Championship Title for the Oak Hall School's Under-8 All-Girls Team!!!

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Contributors

Timotey Gospodinov, Matthew Kolcz, Mike Moschos, Ray Ratliff, NM Andrew Rea, Thomas Slaten, NM Bryan Tillis, Tim Tusing, and NM Derek Zhang.

Chief Editor - George Foote
Games Editor - Miguel Ararat
Book Reviewer - Miguel Ararat
Top Player Lists: Jonathan Cagle and Brooks Chandler
Cover Masthead - Mike Halloran
Software - Microsoft Adobe Photoshop, ChessBase, Microsoft Publisher,
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Team members from L to R: Emma Flores, Nora Thomas, Catalina Mcmillen, Leighann Hood, Ayuna Phillips, & Myka Solberg
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Editor Speaks

If you have been around scholastic chess in Florida for any period of time, you have probably heard of the Oak Hall School. Coach Tim Tusing has lead the team to success for decades and his efforts continue to bear fruit. At this year's Florida Scholastic Championship his teams reached a new milestone by sweeping all five of the Elementary school sections. This is the first time in the tournament's history that this feat has been accomplished and the school, the coach, the parents, and most of all, the students, are to be congratulated. NM Andy Rea covered this year's event and his account starts on **page 4.** The attendance for this tournament continues to trend up as does the skill level of participants.

Not just competing on the State level, the Oak Hall Girl's under 8 team traveled to Chicago in late April for the All-Girls National Championship. They too delivered (details on **page 14)** and brought home a National Title. We have featured them on this quarter's magazine cover. In addition to the under-8 National team title, Sophie Li won the under-10 National title! Well done all!

Coach Tim Tusing & his National Championship All-Girls team.

Other highlights this quarter include coverage of the Florida Collegiate Championship (Many thanks to NM Derek Zhang for his efforts with this event). Regional reports from our 5 RVPs, coverage of the Florida Senior Open, and a glimpse of the GM Sam Shankland event held at the University of Florida. We also have our ongoing games analysis from recent events, chess book & DVD reviews, and a look at the funny side of chess with our feature "Light on the Right." Enjoy!

Yours in Chess,

George Foote

Editor, floridaCHESS Magazine

from the President's desk

Dear FCA members and Florida Chess Community,

I am pleased to share chess has been experiencing a surge in popularity in Florida. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of tournament directors, coaches, organizers, and supporters like you, Florida Chess is thriving and continues to grow at an impressive pace.

One of the main factors driving this growth is the increase in experienced tournament directors across the state. There are now more tournaments offering players of all levels the opportunity to compete and refine their skills. In addition, many school and university programs have started to incorporate chess providing students with a unique and engaging way to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills. If you would like assistance in starting a program or would like directions for the next steps, contact the board! We have also prepared resources for tournament directors on YouTube: **US Chess Tournament Director Workshop** to assist in opening the door for new tournament directors in our state.

Another positive trend in the Florida chess scene is the rise of female participation. Thanks to initiatives such as "The Queen's Cup" in Jacksonville and the Florida State Women and Girls Championships, more and more women and girls are getting involved in the game and finding a welcoming and supportive community. I am hoping that organizers in other parts of the state will also place an annual event on their calendar and we are happy to assist in promotion.

This is also the first year in memory that we have had more than one senior tournament on the books. We recently completed the Florida Senior Open and at the end of May, our representative to the Irwin Tournament of Senior Champions will be decided in Boca Raton at the 2023 Florida State Senior Championships! I again encourage organizers to host an annual event for our more seasoned chess enthusiasts. We are actively looking for tournament directors who have an interest in hosting our state championship events for 2024 and beyond.

I would like to congratulate all members of the Florida Chess community and look forward to working together to build on our success. Whether you are a seasoned player or just starting out, your contributions to Florida Chess are invaluable, and I look forward to seeing the community continue to thrive.

Sincerely,

Bryan Tillis
President, Florida Chess Association

2023 Florida Scholastic Championship!

By Andrew Rea

The second weekend of March, March 10-12, saw a gathering of players from all over Florida to Orlando for the Florida Scholastic Championship- 476 players in nine sections! Of course this also entails a few additional hundreds of parents, coaches, siblings, and fans as well; turns out the hotel site, Wyndham Orlando, was well chosen, able to handle the masses! The event kicked off with the Blitz Championship. A perfect 10/10 in the K-5 Section by Akeras Overlingas, while Vincent Stone scorched the K-12 with 10/10 as well. Dozens of other players were not able to keep up, but all were ready to play Saturday and Sunday.

As noted, nine sections, and as can be observed, all were closely contested. The margins for wins/losses/draws are narrow, and while its completely normal to celebrate the obvious success of those who won their sections, all of our players are to be congratulated for taking on the bruises and stress of their games. We start with our K-1 group, where Mihai Holcomb was able to win all five of his games! Well chased by 4 players at 4/5, but when the dust settled Mihai proved to be unstoppable. (Cont. on page 14)

K-5 Blitz Champion—
Akeras Overlingas

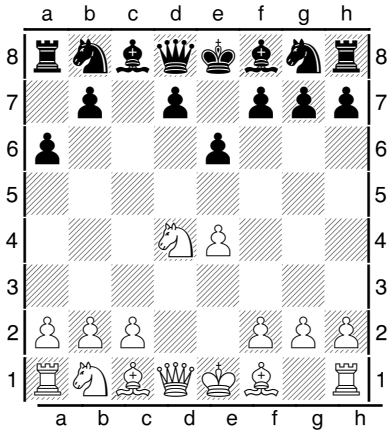
K-12 Blitz Champion -
Vincent Stone

Bughouse Champions -
Aaron Marian & Advait Nair

(181) Li,Sophie (1799) - Datta,Riyaan (1768) [B41]
2023 Florida State Scholastic (5), 12.03.2023 *[nmbtillis]*

[This is the 5th round championship game in the K-5 section. In the previous round Riyaan Datta defeated the top seed that was over 400 points higher rated, he was clearly on a roll going into this game.]

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 a6 [The Sicilian Kan, one of the safest Sicilians.]



5.a4 [A good practical move to step away from preparation.]

[5.Bd3 Seems to be the best theoretical move lately. 5...Bc5 6.Nb3 Ba7 The other choice Be7 has fallen way out of favor with modern engines. 7.Qg4 Nf6 8.Qg3 The g-pawn capture is somewhat poison, this move results in an interesting position following 1–0 (26) Mekhitarian,K (2562) -Harika,D (2517) Chess.com INT 2022.]

5...b6 6.Nc3 Bb7 7.Bd3 [7.g3 This is arguably better development to play against the d5–break.]

7...Nf6 8.Bd2 [8.e5 Black can't allow this move! 8...Nd5 9.Nxd5 Bxd5 10.0–0 Nc6 11.Nxc6 Bxc6 12.Qg4 Black is struggling to finish development, White is much better here.]

8...d5 [A good practical move which is double-edged.]

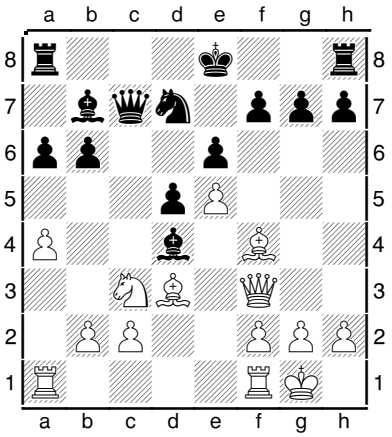
9.e5 Nfd7?? [9...Ne4 Is the best.]

10.Qe2 [After this move it is now a good French position for Black where the e-pawn will be weak.]

[10.Nxe6! A beautiful tactic missed by both players. 10...fxe6 11.Qh5+ Ke7 12.Bg5+]

10...Bc5 11.Nf3 Nc6 [All the army begins to eye e5.]

12.0–0 Qc7 13.Bf4 Nd4 14.Qd1 Nxf3+ 15.Qxf3 Bd4 [A strong move hitting multiple weaknesses.]



16.Qg3 [16.Rfe1 This is best and maintains the balance. 16...Bxc3 Very rarely is it worth parting with the bishop pair for a pawn in this type of position. 17.bxc3 Qxc3 18.Qg4 This is much better for the attacker with the bishop pair.]

16...Bxe5 17.Qxg7 Bxg7 18.Bxc7 Rc8 19.Bf4 Bxc3?! [19...e5 It is not worth the pawn to capture on c3. This move results in a one-sided game. 20.Rfe1 0–0 21.Bf5 exf4 22.Bxd7 Rc5 Black is winning with the bishop pair.]

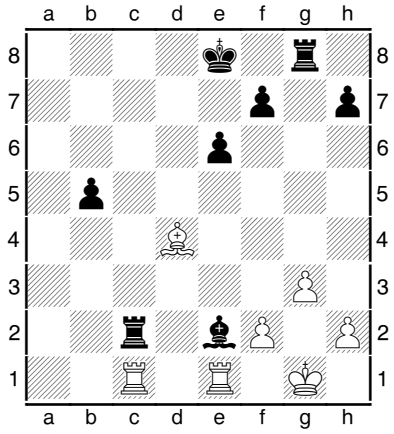
20.bxc3 Rxc3 21.Rfe1 d4 [21...h5 A practical move to slowly attempt to get rid of the isolated pawn.]

22.Bd2 Rc5 23.Rab1 Rg8 [The threat on g2 must be stopped.]

24.g3 Ne5 25.Be2? [25.Rxe5 A natural sacrifice as the bishops will be strong in this ending. 25...Rxe5 26.Rxb6 Bc8 27.Bxh7 White is the aggressor here.]
25...Rxc2 26.Bf4 Bf3 [26...Nf3+ The better choice as White will have back-rank issues for the rest of the game.]

27.Bxe5 Bxe2 28.Bxd4 b5 29.axb5 [29.Rxe2 Another opportunity to change the character of the game. 29...Rxe2 30.axb5 axb5 31.Rxb5 Black will need to seriously work here to come away with the full-point.]

29...axb5 30.Rbc1 [30.Rxe2 The last opportunity in the game to muddy the waters.]



30...Rxc1 31.Rxc1 Bc4 32.Ra1 Rg5 33.f4 Rd5 34.Be3 [34.Bc3 It was essential to stop the progression of the passed pawn.]

34...b4 [Passed pawns must be pushed! Black is now winning.]

35.Rb1 Rb5 36.Kf2 b3 37.Bd4 Ra5 [The rest is a matter of technique.]

38.Ke3 Kd7 39.Kd2 Kc6 40.Kc3 Ra4 41.Re1 Bd5 42.Rb1 Kb5 43.Bg1 f5 44.Bf2 Rc4+ 45.Kxb3 Rb4+ 46.Kc2 Be4+ 47.Kd2 Rxb1 [With this win, Riyaan took clear first and will be our representative to the Rockefeller Tournament of Elementary School State Champions.]

0–1

More Games from the Florida Scholastic Championship

(194) Bach Ngo (2409) - Vincent Stone (2180) [E70]
2023 Florida State Scholastic Champions https://lichess.org/study/Kvc (5.1), 0003
[Derek ZHang]

[Going into this game in the fifth and final round, both players were part of a 4–way tie for first with 3.5/4. A win would guarantee either player at least a share of the state high school title.]

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.Nge2 [The Kramer variation of the King's Indian Defense, where white will place the knight on g3 instead of its usual perch on f3.]

5...0–0 6.Ng3 c5 7.d5 [The best move. With the knight on g3 instead of f3, white should not allow a trade on d4.]

7...e6 8.Be2 a6 9.a4 exd5 10.cxd5 [The preferred way to recapture on d5, keeping stronger control of the center when compared to exd5.]

[10.exd5?! Ne8 11.0–0! f5 12.Bd2 Nf6]

10...Re8 11.0–0! [Though white lacks a clear, forcing plan in this middlegame, white holds a long-term space advantage and a pleasant position. On the other hand, black's position is cramped, but black's weaknesses are easily defensible for now and black has a clear long-term plan with an eventual b5 pawn break.]

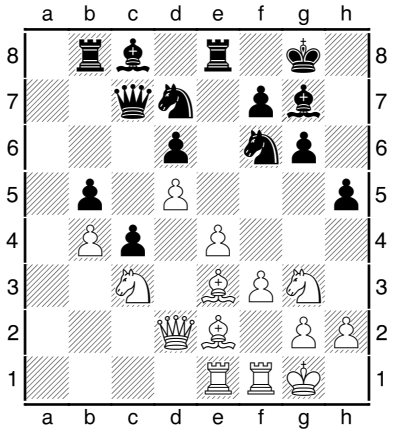
11...h5 12.Bg5 [Black threatens to gain space and kick the g3 knight away with h4, but white prevents it.]

12...Nbd7 13.Qd2 Qc7 14.f3 Rb8 15.Rae1 [A slight misstep, moving pieces away from the queenside, where the immediate action is about to happen.]

15...c4 [Preparing b5 by blocking the e2 bishop's view of b5. Also interesting was b5:]

[15...b5!? 16.axb5 c4 17.bxa6 Bxa6„ Black is down a pawn but has sufficient compensation with weak squares on b3 and d3 and the long-term weakness that is white's b2 pawn.]

16.Be3 b5 17.axb5 axb5 18.b4!



Bach finds the only move that does not leave white clearly worse. Black cannot take the pawn en passant because the b5 pawn will hang with tempi after Nxb5, so white has successfully halted black's kingside attack.]

18...h4 [18...cxb3? 19.Nxb5 Qc2 20.Qxc2 bxc2 21.Nxd6±]

19.Nh1 h3 20.g4 Nh7 [Here, Bach has built up a clear advantage on the board, and perhaps more importantly in this sudden death time control, he's also built up a 58 to 21 minute advantage on the clock.]

21.Ng3?! [A slight inaccuracy. Here the best move was Nf2, as black's h3 pawn cannot be defended and will eventually fall.]

[21.Nf2 Ne5 22.Nxh3²]

21...Ne5 22.Ra1 Bd7 23.Ra7 Rb7 24.Rfa1 Reb8 25.R7a3 [With limited time on the clock, Vincent has done well to equalize from a worse position. White would like to play f4 to make progress, but white will have trouble defending the g4 pawn while also keeping Nd3 at bay. Instead, with time running low on his clock, Vincent understandably goes for the active approach right away and errs with Nd3.]

25...Nd3?! [25...Qd8 26.Qd1 Rc8 27.f4 Nd3 28.Bxd3 cxd3 29.Qxd3 Bxg4 And black has all the play.]

26.Bxd3 cxd3 27.Rc1 Rc8 28.Na2 Qd8 29.Qxd3 Rxc1+ 30.Nxc1 Qf6 [Bach has picked up the loose pawn on d3 while continuing to maintain a solid position. In addition, he holds a 47 to 7 minute advantage on the clock. His conversion from this point forward is not perfect according to the engine, but it is excellent when considering Vincent's impending time trouble, as Bach never lets the position get out of control.]

31.Bd2 Rc7 32.Nge2 Qh4 33.Ra8+ Nf8 34.Ng3 Qf6 35.Ra2 [Preventing any forays of the black queen into b2.]

35...Rc4 36.Nce2 Qd8 37.Nf1 Qb6+ 38.Ne3 Rc8 39.Kf1 [Side stepping the black queen's pin.]

39...Nh7 40.Nd1 Be5 41.f4 Bg7 42.Ne3 Re8 43.g5?! [Perhaps Bach's only inaccuracy in his conversion. Vincent correctly responds with f6!, which slightly opens up the game in a position where black's king is safer.]

43...f6! 44.gxf6 Nxf6 45.Ng3 Ng4 46.Nxg4 Bxg4 47.Be3 Qd8?! [Alas, with just one minute and 21 seconds left on the clock, Vincent errs by going for activity on the kingside with a future Qh4 instead of keeping his queen on the c-file by playing Qc7.]

[47...Qc7 48.Qxb5 Rc8 49.Qd3 Qb7 50.Bd2 Ra8 51.Ra5 Rxa5 52.bxa5 Qb2² With the two bishops and white's somewhat exposed king, black still has good chances of holding here.]

48.Qxb5 Bf3 49.Qc6 Rf8 50.Kg1 Qh4 51.Qxd6 Kh7 52.Ra7 Rg8 53.Qe7 Qg4 54.Qg5 Qc8 [With a queen trade resulting in an obviously lost ending, Vincent instead chooses to force Bach to find the mate, which he does.]

55.Qh4+ Bh5 56.Nxh5 g5 57.Nf6+ Kg6 58.Qxg5# [A valiant defensive effort by Vincent, but Bach kept up the pressure throughout the game and brought home the point and the state

high school title by pressing an ultimately decisive advantage on the clock.]

1–0

(195) Brejesh Chakrabarti (2368) - Ubaldo Lopez-Naranjo (1943) [A05]
2023 Florida State Scholastic Champions https://lichess.org/study/Kvc (3.1)
[Derek Zhang]

[A huge upset in Round 3 of the K-8 section that shook up the standings and threw the fight for the state middle school title wide open.]

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.g3 e6 3.Bg2 d5 4.0–0 c5 5.d3 Nc6 6.Nbd2 e5?! [I only mark e5 as dubious because Ubaldo moved his e-pawn twice in the first six moves. It's not actually a bad move, though.]

7.e4 d4 8.Nc4 Bd6 [8...Qc7 Would have preserved the bishop pair.]

9.Nxd6+ [Taking the bishop pair before black can retreat the bishop to c7.]

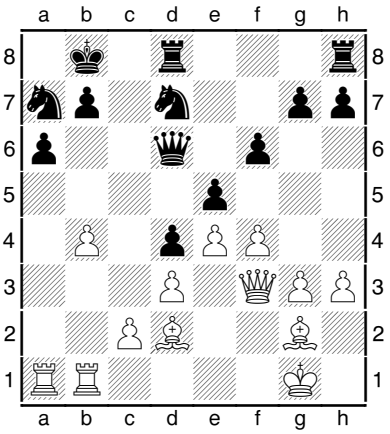
9...Qxd6 10.Nd2 Be6 11.f4 0–0–0 12.Nf3 Bg4 13.h3 Bxf3 14.Qxf3 Nd7 15.Bd2 f6 [And we reach a position that reveals much about the resulting middlegame. It feels like white should be much better - white has the two bishops and it feels like white's pawn storm will be much faster - but actually proving that advantage will be an entirely different matter.]

16.a3 Kb8 17.Rfb1 a6 18.b4?! [The first mistake. Given that black's kingside attack is not going anywhere anytime soon, white needed to be more patient.]

18...cxb4 19.axb4 [19.Bxb4 Nxb4 20.axb4 *(20.Rxb4 Rc8 21.Rab1 Rc7µ)* 20...b5!³]

19...Na7!

(Diagram Next Column)



The critical move. Suddenly, white's attack has been halted, and it is actually white who will have problems on the queenside, specifically in regards to the weak pawn on c2.]

20.c4?! [Brejesh tries to solve this problem right away while opening up lines for his bishops, but this move only creates more problems in the form of an outpost on d4 for black's knights and a weak pawn on d3.]

[20.Rb2 Rc8 21.h4 Rc6 22.Bh3³ Better was this plan of defending c2 and slowly activating the g2 bishop by creating an opening for it on h3.]

20...dxc3 21.Bxc3 Nb5 22.Bd2 Nf8 [Rerouting the knight to d4.]
23.Be3 [23.f5!? Would have at least posed black some problems by preventing the f8 knight from jumping to e6 and then d4.]

23...Ne6 24.f5? [The previous move was the time to play f5. f5 now does nothing to stop black's knights from dominating d4, and instead ensures that white's own light squared bishop will never get into the game.]

24...Ned4 [From here, black's play is straightforward and powerful.]

25.Qf2 Rc8 26.Rb2 Rc3 27.Bf1 Rhc8 28.Raa2 Rb3 29.Rxb3 Nxb3 30.Qe1 N5d4 31.Bg2 Nc2 32.Qd1 Nbd4 [32...Nxe3?! 33.Qxb3 Still winning for black, but more difficult to play from a human perspective.]

33.Bf2 Qxb4 34.Kh2 Qb3 35.Ra5 Nb4 36.Qg4 Ndc6 37.Ra1 Nxd3 38.Bg1 Rc7 39.Qh5 Qb2 40.Rd1 Qc2 41.Bb6 Rc8 42.Qf3 Ndb4? 43.Rd7 [Suddenly, white has counterplay again. Brejesh has done well to hang in the game and make things difficult.]

43...Ka8 44.Rxg7 a5 45.Qh5? [I'm very hesitant to call this move a mistake (even though the engine marks it as a blunder), and only do so because white had an alternative that equalizes. Qh5 is a very intuitive move that I might have played in this position as well.]

[45.g4! With the idea of creating a passed f-pawn. 45...h6 *(45...Nd3 46.g5 fxg5 47.f6 Nf4 48.f7+–)* 46.Rg6 a4 47.Rxf6 Qb2 48.Rd6 a3 49.f6=]

45...a4 46.Qf7 Rb8 47.Bc7 Nd4! [Threatining Nf3+ with mate coming soon after.]

48.h4 Nd3 49.Kh3 Nf2+ 50.Kh2 Nd3 51.Bxb8 [A curious decision to go for this instead of repeating with Kh3 and forcing black to find the mate with Nd1:]

[51.Kh3 Nf2+ 52.Kh2 Nd1 53.Bxb8 Nf3+ 54.Kh3 Nf2#]

51...Nf3+ 52.Kh3 Nf2# [Ubaldo's huge upset shook up the top of the K-8 section, with more than a dozen players realistically in play for the state title going into Sunday's fourth and fifth rounds.]

0–1

(196) Oscar Williams (2029) - Aaron Marian (1833) [B40]
2023 Florida State Scholastic Champions https://lichess.org/study/Kvc (4.1), 0003
[Derek Zhang]

[The top board clash in Round 4 of the K-8 Championship. Oscar, the higher rated player, came into the game with 2.5/3, while Aaron had 3/3.]

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Bd3 [5.Nc3 The more popular reply to Nf6. 5...d6 6.Be3 a6 7.f3 b5 8.g4,]

5...Nc6 6.Nxc6 bxc6 7.c4 [Black has already equalized (white's d3 bishop looks especially misplaced!) but some accurate center pawn moves will be needed to maintain equality.]

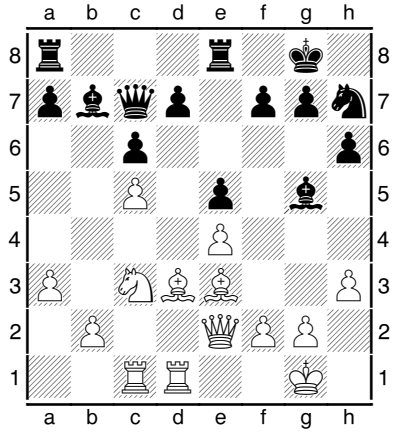
7...Qc7 [7...e5 8.0–0 Bc5 9.Qe2 d6=; 7...d5 8.Nd2 Bd6 9.Qc2 Qc7=]

8.Nc3 Be7 9.0–0 0–0 10.Qe2 e5 11.Be3 Bb7?! [Bb7 allows c5, which traps in both of black's bishops and establishes greater central control.]

[11...d6 12.a3 a5 13.b4 axb4 14.axb4 Rxa1 15.Rxa1²]

12.Rfd1?! [At the risk of appearing overly repetitive, I won't mark each of the next four moves as dubious, even though all of them allow or miss c5 until white finally played c5 on move 16. Suffice it to say that both players had ample opportunity to take control of the c5 square for themselves!]

12...Rfe8 13.Rac1 h6 14.h3 Nh7 15.a3 Bg5 16.c5!



Finally!
16...Bxe3?! [Bxe3 trades black's only immediate defender of the d6 square, allowing white to easily establish an outpost on d6.]

17.Qxe3 Nf8 18.Bc4 Ne6 19.Bxe6!? [The engine doesn't love this move, but I do. It simplifies the position to a middlegame with two major advantages for white: 1) a good knight vs a bad bishop, and 2) a strong outpost on d6. For two human players, these advantages arguably already make this position technically winning for white.]

19...Rxe6 20.Rd2 Ba6 21.Rcd1 [Establishing control over the d6 outpost.]

21...Re7 22.Rd6 Rd8 [Unless white errs, black's pieces will be forever tied down to the defense of the d7 pawn. White can spend as much time as he desires preparing his eventual breakthrough.]

23.Qg3 Kh7 24.Kh1 Bc4 25.f4?! [Allows exf4, but black does not take this opportunity.]

25...f6?! [25...exf4 26.Qxf4 Qa5 27.Qf2² This is essentially the same position as before, except that black's e7 rook has a semi-open file and white's e4 and c5 pawns are weaker than before. White is still better here, but not by nearly as much as before.]

26.f5 Bf7 27.R1d3 Qa5 28.Qf2 Qc7 29.Qd2 [Patient buildup by white, first tying down black to the defense of the d7 pawn.]

29...Qb7 30.Kh2 Bc4 31.Rg3 Bf7 32.Nd1 Rf8 33.Nf2 Bh5 34.Rgd3 [White has taken great advantage of the immobility of black's pieces to position his own pieces on the optimal squares.]

34...Rd8 35.g4 [A great illustration of the principle of two weaknesses. White has focused as much attacking power as possible on the weak d7 pawn, and black is barely holding on. All white needs to do is to create a second weakness (in this case, by making black's king weak) to break through.]

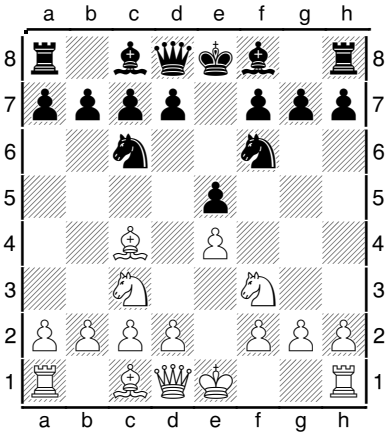
35...Bf7 36.h4 Bc4 37.Rg3 Rh8 38.g5 hxg5 39.hxg5 Kg8+ 40.Kg2 Kf7 41.gxf6 gxf6 42.Rg6 [And white breaks through. The rest is simple.]

42...Ke8 43.Rdxf6 Reh7 44.Rh6 Qb3 45.Rxh7 Rxh7 46.Qg5 Rh8 47.Rh6 Rg8 48.Rg6 Rh8 49.Rg7 Bf7 50.Qf6 a5 51.Qxe5+ Kd8 52.Rxf7 Rh2+ 53.Kxh2 Qxf7 54.Qb8+ Ke7 55.Qd6+ Kd8 56.Ng4 Qh5+ 57.Kg3 Qh1 58.Qb8+ Ke7 59.f6+ Kf7 60.Qd6 Qg1+ 61.Kf3 Qh1+ 62.Kf4 Qc1+ 63.Kf5 Qf1+ 64.Qf4 Qh1 65.Ne5+ Kf8 66.Qg4 Qf1+ 67.Nf3 Qxf3+ 68.Qxf3 d5 69.Qg4 Ke8 70.Qg7 Kd8 71.Qe7+ Kc8 72.f7 Kb8 73.f8R# [An interesting game that was largely decided in moves 12–16, where both players refused to claim control of the c5 and d6 squares until white finally did so on move 16. From there, white showed excellent technique to bring home the win. Both players would go on to tie for second place in the K-8 Championship.]

1–0

(190) Honmurgi,Viraj - Holcomb,Mihai (999) [C55]
2023 Florida State Scholastic (5), 11.03.2023
[nmbtillis]

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bc4 [One of the most common opening mistakes in chess.]



[4.Bb5 The mainline of the 4–Knights.;
4.d4 The popular secondary move.]

4...Nxe4 5.Nxe4 d5 6.Nxe5? [6.Bd3 This is the best attempt. 6...dxe4 7.Bxe4 Bd6 Black has easy development and better control of the center.]

6...Nxe5 7.d4 dxc4 [Black was winning and got in a bit of a hurry.]

[7...Nxc4 Black is a clean piece up with no compensation for the

opponent.]

8.dxe5 Qxd1+ [When up material, trade down.]

9.Kxd1 Be7 10.b3 cxb3 11.cxb3 [11.axb3 It is much better to capture with the a-pawn to activate the rook.]

11...0–0 12.Bf4 Bf5 13.f3 Bxe4 14.fxe4 [White's pawn structure is compromised.]

14...f6 15.exf6 Bxf6 16.Bxc7?? Bxa1 [There were many more moves but Mihai converted without issue going on to win the K–1 Championship.]

0–1

(201) Sha,Yi (1762) - Mulay,Vivian (1735) [D47]
2023 Florida State Scholastic (5), 11.03.2023
[nmbti]

[This was the titan matchup in the K-3 Championship section.]

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Nf3 e6 5.e3 Nbd7 6.Bd3 dxc4 7.Bxc4 b5 [Semi-Slav Defense: Main Line, Meran Variation]

8.Bd3 Bd6 [The third choice move in the database favored by Kramnik and Shankland.]

9.e4 [9.0–0 This move is far more flexible than the main game. 9...0–0 10.Qc2 Bb7 11.a3 Rc8 12.b4 Retains a small plus for White as there is active plan against the natural c5–break. Following 1–0 (70) Mamedyarov,S (2782)-Shankland,S (2709) Saint Louis 2021.]

9...e5 [White can't gain space in the center, Black has fully equalized.]

10.dxe5 Nxe5 11.Bc2 [White loses the thread, good preparation by Black.]

[11.Nxe5 Bxe5 12.0–0 Ng4 Though the engine is giving equality this seems far more comfortable for Black.]

11...Bg4 12.Be3 Bxf3 [12...0–0 Keeping the tension could inflict even more damage as White may very well have a knee-jerk reaction to attempt to fix the problem.]

13.gxf3 Nc4 14.Rb1 Nxe3 15.fxe3 Bc5? [White's king will never find safety, keeping the queens on the board will favor the attacker.]

[15...Nh5 Would be the editor's first choice.]

16.Qxd8+ Rxd8 17.Ke2 [The tide has quickly changed, White went from a very shaky middlegame position to a solid endgame with an active king.]

17...0–0 18.b4 Be7 19.a4 a6 20.Rhg1 [20.f4 Retains a big edge.]

20...Nd7 21.axb5 axb5 22.f4 Nb6 23.Bd3 Ra8 [The position is balanced.]

[23...Rd6 Best is to pile up on the d-file activating all of the pieces.]

24.Rgc1 Rfc8 25.e5 Bf8 [25...Ra3 Black again needs to be looking to pressure targets.]

26.h4 Ra3 27.Ne4 Ra4?? [27...Nd5 Necessary to maintain the balance.]

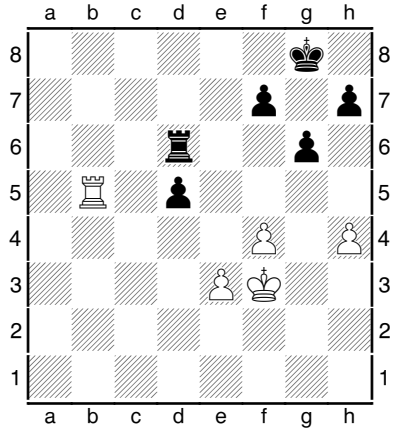
28.Nd6 Ra2+ 29.Kf3 Bxd6 30.exd6 Rd2 31.Rd1 Rxd1 32.Rxd1 Nd5 33.Rc1 [This quickly gets back to equality.]

[33.Bxb5 A simple deflection, the machine gives nearly +7!]

33...Rd8 34.Ra1 Nxb4 35.Be4 g6 36.Rb1 Nd5 [36...c5 This maintains the tension and the better minor piece in this ending. Black should win with the two connected passed pawns on the queenside.]

37.Bxd5 cxd5 38.Rxb5 Rxd6
[This is by no means a trivial rook and pawn draw. The engine may give 0.00 but there are many ways to go wrong.]

(Diagram top of next column)



39.e4 [Simplification is a good idea for the defender.]

39...dxe4+ 40.Kxe4 Kg7 41.h5
Another move showing great technique.]

41...Rf6 42.Rg5 h6 43.Rg2 Rf5 44.hxg6 fxg6 [As the dust settles Black has the outside h-pawn. Rarely in rook and pawn endgames will a rook pawn be telling.]

45.Rh2 h5 46.Rh4 Kf6 47.Rh3 Ra5 48.Rc3 Ra4+ 49.Kf3 Ra5 50.Ke4 h4 [This is a question of technique and time. Black is not obliged to push the pawn too quickly. Very often in these endings best technique is to shuffle and wait, Silman once stated if you can do it in 2 moves or 10 moves in an endgame do it in 10.]

51.Rc6+ Kg7 52.Kf3 Rh5 53.Rc1 h3 54.Kg3 Kf6 55.Rc6+ Kg7 56.Rc2 [The pawn is going nowhere.]

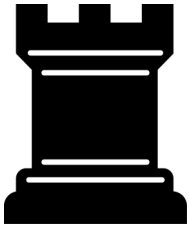
56...Rf5 57.Rh2 Kf6 58.Rxh3 [Many more moves were played but eventually a draw was agreed from the 0.00 position. A great fight by both young players! Yi edged Vivian out on tiebreaks with the players finishing as co-champions at 1 and 2 along with a number of other players.]

½–½

K-1 Championship Section

K-3 Championship Section

K-5 Championship Section



K-8 Championship Section

K-12 Championship Section

K-1 Championship

1. Mihai Holcomb
2. Artsiom Parkhats
3. Leighann Hood
4. Mark Wang
5. Anaya Atara
6. Rajiv Honmurgi
7. Jaiden Luo
8. Ty Parker
9. Suraj Jani
10. Yash Ravishankar

K-3 Championship

1. Yi Sha
2. Vivan Mulay
3. Aakash Jani
4. Damian Alexander
5. Ryan Ratliff
6. Addison Baumstark
7. Winston Wu
8. Tanisha Saha
9. Daniel Tal
10. Celine Chen

K-3 Under 600

1. Michael Wang
2. Asa Bodlak
3. Shyam Garg
4. Knox Wilder
5. Sajoli Ghosh
6. Hendrix Smith
7. Sara Bauyrzhan
8. David Greene
9. Rowan Slifer
10. Julian Moguillansky

K-5 Championship

1. Riyaan Datta
2. Diego Jimenez
3. Akeras Overlingas
4. Platon Kaidash
5. Saatvik Dasari
6. Sophie Li
7. Maxwell Yang
8. Aashish Jagan
9. Rui Sha
10. Achyuth Madhu

K-5 Under 700

1. Nicholas James Vu
2. Prajwal Redd Chintamam
3. Cole Tecau
4. Max Ulmer
5. Pradosh Swain
6. Zhassurbek Azazkhanov
7. Asher Austin
8. Mae Travers
9. Jack Eisenmenger
10. Gus Bleakley

K-8 Championship

1. Advait Nair
2. Ubaldo Lopez-Naranjo
3. FM Brejesh Chakrabarti
4. Arav Patel
5. Oscar Williams
6. Aaron Marian
7. Om Mishra
8. Santiago Cesares
9. Brian Bird
10. Agrim Kumar

K-8 Under 1000

1. Catherine Jiang
2. Parvati Chakrabarti
3. Vincent Hubacheck
4. Arthur Peraud
5. Ethan Hsu
6. Deetya Thummala
7. Kahla Morales
8. Luke Wright
9. Tristan Cary
10. Tristan Squire

K-12 Championship

1. FM Bach Ngo
2. Nicolas De La Colina
3. Raghav Venkat
4. Vikram Rajmohan
5. Michael Guan
6. Anthony Gospodinov
7. Taban Chin
8. Vincent Stone
9. Jose Cesares
10. Adel Abdullina

K-12 under 1100

1. Cole Carin
2. Robert Abel
3. Bhagyesh Jethwani
4. Kenneth Wu
5. Dylan Nguyen
6. Vanessa Bajo
7. Viswambhar Janapati
8. Aarush Tripathi
9. Grayson Chambers
10. Ivan Yuk

K-5 Blitz

1. Akeras Overlingas
2. Arthur Peraud
3. Winston Wu
4. Riyann Datta
5. Nicolas Lie
6. Hrehaan Waghmode
7. Platon Kaidash
8. Max Ulmer
9. Prajwal Chintamani
10. Zhassurbek Azazkhanov

K-12 Blitz

1. Vincent Stone
2. Vikram Rajmohan
3. Advait Nair
4. Arav Patel
5. Aaron Marian
6. Raghav Venkat
7. Sritej Sattaru
8. Oscar Williams
9. Antony Gospodinov
10. Maxwell Yang

Bughouse

1. NBAnerds (Aaron & Advait)
2. TheMafia (Ethan & Vincent)
3. WW (Winston & William)
4. FLkings (Oscar & Akeras)
5. A&S (Akshat & Sritej)
6. Neel & Amit
7. Aakash & Henry
8. Anthony & Derrick
9. Lui & Max
10. KingMonkeyKlothers.com (Sebastian & Noah)

K-1 Championship Teams
1. Oak Hall School
2. The Green School
3. Downtown Doral Charter

K-3 Championship Teams
1. Oak Hall School

K-3 Under 600 Teams
1. Oak Hall School
2. Lake Highland Prep
3. Queen of Peace
4. Audubon Park
5. The Greene School
6. South Miami Heights Elementary
7. Baldwin
8. Deer Park Elementary
9. Orlando Science Elementary
10. Windermere Elementary

K-5 Championship Teams
1. Oak Hall School
2. Everglades Elementary
3. The Greene School
4. Williams Elementary

K-5 Under 700 Teams
1. Oak Hall School
2. Divine Savior Academy
3. The Greene School
4. South Miami
5. Baldwin
6. Queen Of Peace
7. Lake Highland Prep
8. Carrollwood Day School
9. Corbett Prep School

K– 8 Championship Teams
1. Abraham Lincoln Middle School
2. Academy Prep Center of Lakeland
3. Fruit Cove Middle School
4. Liberty
5. Benito Middle School
6. BAK Middle School of the Arts

K-8 under 1000 Teams
1. Divine Savior Academy
2. Miami Country Day School
3. Julia Landon College Prep
4. FR Co-op
5. BAK Middle School of the Arts
6. Academy Prep Tampa
7. Glen Ridge Middle School
8. Audubon Park
9. The Green School
10. Audubon Park

K-12 Championship Teams
1. Buchholz High School
2. Hillsborough High School
3. Seminole High School
4. St. Petersburg High School
5. Boone High School
6. Miami Country Day School
7. WIN High School

K-12 Under 1100 Teams
1. Lake Nona High School
2. Divine Savior Academy
3. FAU High School
4. King High School
5. Crestview High School
6. Grace Family HomeSchool Co-op
7. Hillsborough High School
8. Belen Jesuit Prep
9. WIN High School
10. Miami Country Day School

FLORIDA'S TOP PLAYERS
("Top 100" Current Player Lists)

Players from National Top 100 lists	age	rating
Kumar, Nikhil	18	2442
Ngo, Bach	14	2413
Chakrabarti, Brejesh	12	2368
Venkat, Raghav	18	2362
De La Colina, Nicolas Alejandro	17	2277
Kumar, Naman	16	2205
Gao, Marvin	14	2196
Stone, Vincent William	17	2182
Chen, Benjamin Lj	18	2164
Wu, William	14	2142
Hernandez, Ronald	15	2137
Gospodinov, Antony	16	2134
Shukla, Aniket	14	2131
Guan, Michael Xukun	14	2105
Overlingas, Akeras	10	2092
Pothuri, Abhiram Sai	13	2091
Sattaru, Sritej Sai	13	2091
Shen, Jason(Haohan)	16	2074
Ligotti, John Joseph	16	2056
Drum, Robert David	17	2031
Nair, Advait	14	2028
etlyaev, Aleks	16	2017
Farragut, Cannon	12	2017
Ziegler, Nate	13	1997
Lang, Jayden	15	1993
Reddy, Satvik	18	1991
Kurbanov, Abror	17	1987
Amaya, Brayan Angel	17	1987
Patel, Arav	14	1969
Bynum, Jacorey	15	1958
Yang, Maxwell Z	10	1935
Lopez-Naranjo, Ubaldo	14	1927
Suresh, Akshat	14	1914
Roy, Ayush	11	1802
Datta, Riyaan	11	1781
Mishra, Om	12	1780
Sha, Yi	8	1729
Li, Sophie	9	1715
Jani, Aakash	8	1686
Muneepeerakul, Analaya	11	1640
Ratliff, Ryan	9	1580
Alexander, Damian	9	1516
Wu, Winston	8	1469
Thomas, Henry	9	1460
Zang, Flynn	9	1436
Sha, Rui	9	1423
Mulay, Vivan Prakash	8	1421
Kumar, Ishir	9	1380
Yang, Grace Siqi	9	1373
Luini, Lucio	8	1357
Liu, Richard	9	1322
Saha, Tanisha	8	1229
Chen, Celine	7	1195
Baumstark, Addison	8	1182
Holcomb, Mihai	6	985

GIRLS

Shama Yisrael	19	2071
Sisira Yerrajennu	15	1855
Sophie Li	9	1818
Alice Wu	15	1817
Jolie Huang	13	1801
Zoe Zelner	18	1756
Priya Anna Gutta	18	1726
Aarna Warekar	13	1678
Grace Yang	9	1588
Chloe Min	16	1570
Maya Behur	16	1566
Elena Anastasia	12	1506
Hannah Ciupe	18	1442
Alison Solik	17	1422
Shalom Yisrael	17	1405
Celine Chen	7	1395
Scarlett Asselta	10	1389
Sabrina Chile Paz	15	1366
Varshini Venkat	15	1353

SENIORS (65+)

DOUG R MCCLINTOCK	69	2288
PAUL H FIELDS	66	2264
STEPHEN STOYKO	75	2215
CONSTANTINE XANTHOS	76	2200
A.J. GOLDSBY	65	2200
JAVIER ANTONIO TORRES	70	2200

WOMEN (CURRENT MEMBERS ACTIVE)

BAHAR HALLAYEVA	2293
WFM AMELIA HERNANDEZ	2101
JESSICA SHOR REGAM	2076
SHAMA YISRAEL	2071
WFM VLADLENA CIUBARA	2069
ALICE WU	1817
DR. VARINIA CABRERA	1814
SISIRA S YERRAJENNU	1799

TOP BLITZ

GM Fabiano Caruana	2881
GM Julio Becerra	2645
FM Corey Acor	2510

TOP QC

GM Fabiano Caruana	2665
GM Julio Becerra	2544
Renier Gonzalez	2513

CORRESPONDENCE

KEITH RODRIQUEZ	**2366**
BORIS RATNER	**2282**
PAUL B OTT	**2179**
ALLEN WOOLLEN	**2079**
LINDA DECHAINE	**1706**

OVERALL ACTIVE (5/2023)

GM FABIANO CARUANA	2834
IM WILLIAM HERNANDEZ-GONZALEZ	2595
IM ARNOALDO FERNANDEZ DE LA VARA	2508
GM JULIO J BECERRA	2507
GM MR. DANIEL FERNANDEZ	2500
GM RENIER GONZALEZ	2472
FM JORGE LEON OQUENDO	2455
IM NIKHIL KUMAR	2442
ROBERT M PEREZ	2441
IM SAUDIN ROBOVIC	2412
FM BACH NGO	2402
FM EIGEN WANG	2394
IM AUGUSTO CESAR CAMPOS	2394
IM YUNIER LEYVA RIVERA	2382
FM BREJESH CHAKRABATI	2369
FM FERNANDO LARRUA	2367
FM COREY BRYAN ACOR	2347
NM RAGHAV VENKAT	2347
FM ALEXANDER ZELNER	2344
FM DALTON PERRINE	2331
FM MAXIMO CABRERA	2329
NM NICOLAS DE LA COLINA	2316
NM SCOTT RAMER	2301
FM RENZO GUTIERREZ	2288
NM LEE J PHELPS	2286
FM JEAN MARCO CRUZ	2272
FM ARNALDO FERRAGUT	2263
FM CESAR VALIDO BOUZA	2262
NM NICKOLAS ARTHUR MOORE	2260
NM NAT KELLEHER	2258
NM PEDRO HERNANDEZ-PEREZ	2256
NM OSVALDO PENO CABRERA	2253
NM BRYAN TILLIS	2250
GM RASHID ZIATDINOV	2247
NM JACOB CHEN	2245
NM BRITT RYERSON	2241
FM ROBERTO ALVAREZ FERREIRO	2238
FM JONATHAN DAVID SARFATI	2234
NM MEL GOSS	2222
NM RYAN EDWARD HAMLEY	2220
CM ANTONIO ARENCIBIA	2220
NM CARLOS GASTON ANDRETTA	2217
NM TODD CHARLES BRYANT	2213
NM MARVIN GAO	2208
FM WALDO SERRANO	2204
NM RODELAY MEDINA	2201
NM RONALD HERNANDEZ	2201

Girls Nationals

By Tim Tusing

The Oak Hall Chess Club Girls Team won the 18th Annual All Girls National Chess Championship in Chicago (April 28-30). The event was sponsored by the Kasparov Chess Foundation, The Renaissance Chess Foundation, and the United States Chess Federation and determines champions in different age sections. There were 471 players from 35 different states participating in this event.

The Oak Hall Girls Team won the under 8 Championship in a very competitive field. Throughout the 6 round event one point separated 3 different teams.

The tournament came down to the final game in the final round that pitted OHS first grader Emma Leah Flores against a higher rated New York Dalton School opponent. Late in the 2+ hour long game Emma found herself in a losing position that seemed hopeless but managed to fight her way to an amazing comeback victory! That win gave the Eagles the point they needed to finish with 11 ½ points , enough to defeat New York PS77 Lower Lab (11 points), and New York Dalton School (10 points).

The team was anchored by 2nd grader Celine Chen who finished in 7th place overall with 4.5 points. Emma Flores finished 17th overall (first place rated under 500) with 4 points. First graders Nora Thomas, Catalina Mcmillen, and Leighann Hood finished with 3 points each. Myka Solberg scored 2 ½ points and Ayuna Phillips 2 points. The team victory earns Oak Hall its 3rd national chess title this year and 21st in the club's 26 year history.

Sophie Li (3rd grade) successfully won every game in the 6 round tournament to place first and be crowned as the All Girls Under 10 National Champion! Last year Sophie placed 2nd in the same section and was determined to come back this year and win it all. Her hard work certainly paid off!

Both Celine and Sophie attend Logic Lab (after school) in Gainesville and they are trained under the guidance of coach Britt Ryerson.

All Girls Under 10 National Champion Sophie Li.

Top Row L to R: Myka Solberg, Leighann Hood, Emma Flores, & Coach Tim Tusing **Bottom Row L to R:** Celine Chen, Ayuna Philips, Catalina Mcmillen, & Nora Thomas

L to R: : Myka Solberg, Nora Thomas, Catalina Mcmillen, Emma Flores, Leighann Hood, Ayuna Phillips, Celine Chen

L to R: Leighann Hood & Myka Solberg.

(178) Nadir,Advait (1983) - Pothuri,Abhiram (2091) [B22]
The Villages Open 2023, 26.02.2023 *[Ararat,Miguel]*

This game is a model game in the modern approach against the isolated queen pawn (IQP). Modern players refrain from the old recipe stop,block and capture the IQP.]

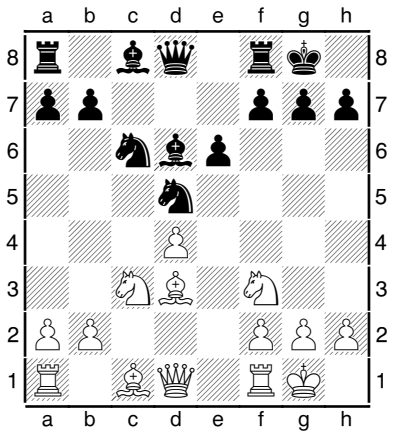
1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 [White refrains from the popular 3.Bb5 and save the theoretical duel in the Rossolimo for another day.]

3.c3 [A move that keeps the game in positional waters and recently used by Kramnik to beat a 2700 rated player.]

[The following games are good examples of the level of play in the Rossolimo these days. 3.Bb5 g6 4.0–0 Bg7 5.c3 Nf6 6.Re1 0–0 7.d4 d5 8.e5 Ne4 9.Be3 cxd4 10.cxd4 0–1 (49) Caruana,F (2792)-Carlsen,M (2865) Wijk aan Zee 2022 10...Qb6 11.Bxc6 Qxc6 12.Qb3 Bg4 13.Rc1 Qd7 14.Ne1 f5 15.Nd3 g5 16.f3 f4 17.fxe4 fxe3 18.Nc5 Qe8 19.Nc3 e2 20.Nxd5 e6 21.Ne3 Rf4 22.Nxg4 Rxg4 23.h3 Rh4 24.Nxe6 Kh8 25.Qxb7 Qg8 1–0 (25) So,W (2760)-Gukesh,D (2725) Kolkata 2022]

3...Nf6 [3...d5 4.exd5 Qxd5 5.Na3 Nf6 6.Be2 e6 7.0–0 Be7 8.d4 cxd4 9.Nb5 Qd7 10.Nbxd4 Nxd4 11.Nxd4 0–0 12.Bf4 Bd6 13.Bb5 Qe7 14.Nf5 exf5 15.Bxd6 Qd8 16.Bxf8 Qxf8 17.Qd4 Be6 18.Rfd1 Qc8 19.h3 a6 20.Be2 Bd5 21.c4 Be4 22.Bf1 h5 23.b4 Qe8 24.a4 f4 25.f3 Bc2 26.Re1 Qc6 27.Qxf4 Bxa4 28.b5 Qc5+ 29.Qe3 Qb4 30.Reb1 Qa5 31.c5 Nd5 32.Qd4 Nc3 33.Rc1 1–0 (33) Kramnik,V (2753) -Gukesh,D (2730) Berlin 2023]

4.e5 Nd5 5.d4 cxd4 6.cxd4 d6 7.exd6 e6 8.Nc3 Bxd6 9.Bd3 0–0 10.0–0



Out of the opening white has an isolated queen pawn (IQP) and should attack the white king and avoid simplifications. Against the IQP black want to transition to a favorable endgame, secure his king, prevent the pawn break d4–d5 and control the d5 square. About the control of the square in front of the IQP. The modern approach does not required placing a blockading piece in front of the IQP. For example, in some variations of the Queens Gambit Accepted a black knight goes to Nb6 instead of d5.]

10...h6 11.Re1 [11.Qe2 Nf6 12.Rd1 Nb4 13.Bb1 b6 14.a3 Nbd5 15.Qd3 I founded this alternative after the 12.d5 move did not work. This type of analysis can be used by any player to annotate his games before using a computer engine. You go over the game see how the game develops and then try to predict a critical position. Then, you go back and improve the game of a player or suggest a new plan. This process allow you to compare your ideas with the engine suggestions, instead of any added the computer variations to your chess game pgn file. Yes, it takes time and will improve your game.]

11...Nf6 12.Be3 [White can not play d4–d5 using the Bh7+ trick because black can use the same tactical motif and come up on top.]

[12.d5 exd5 13.Nxd5 Nxd5 14.Bh7+ Kxh7 15.Qxd5 Bxh2+ 16.Kxh2 Qxd5]

12...Nb4 13.Be2 b6 14.a3 Nbd5 15.Rc1 Bb7 [Black control the d5 square after a timely redeployment of both knights and development of his light square bishop to b7.]

16.Nxd5 Nxd5 17.Bd3 Qf6 18.Bb1 Nf4 [After, Qf6, I expected Rfd8 with pressure on the IQP. Black aims to capture the pawn on g2 to remove the defender of the f3 knight. I lost a game as white in the World Open 2012 to a similar tactic. My opponent played Bc8xh3 and removed the guard of my Nf3 (ouch) A similar idea is play by black in the open Sicilian against a white knight on c3. Black plays Nc4xb2 followed by Rc8xc3.]

19.Bxf4 Qxf4 20.Qd3 [White creates a bigger threat than BxNf3 followed by Qxh2.]

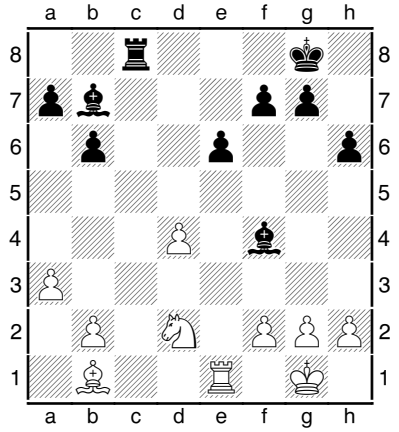
20...Rfc8 21.Rxc8+ [21.Qh7+ Kf8 22.Qh8+ Ke7 23.Qxg7 Rxc1 24.Rxc1 Bxf3 *(24...Qxc1+* I founded the move while going for the main variation that missed Qg1*.)* 25.gxf3 Qxh2+ 26.Kf1 Qh1+ 27.Qg1]

21...Rxc8 22.Qd2 [22.Ne5 After going over the game the queen exchange was bad for white because it does not reduces black's initiative. The white knight finally reaches his ideal square in an IQP position.]

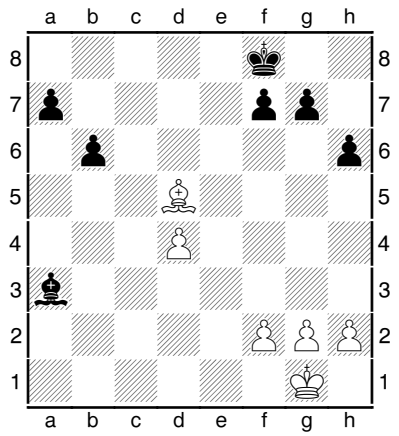
22...Qxd2 [22...Qg4 with the threat Bxf3.]

23.Nxd2 Bf4 [[#] White transition to a worse endgame with an IQP facing a bishop pair. The threat is to exchange rooks on c1 then take on b2 or a3 (I used this motive in a tournament game when I was 1300–1400 rated)]

(Diagram Next Page)



24.Ne4 Rc1 25.Rxc1 Bxc1 26.Nd6 Bd5 27.Nc8 [I missed this counter play by white.]
27...Bxb2 28.Ne7+ Kf8 29.Nxd5 exd5 30.Ba2 Bxa3 31.Bxd5 [[#]



White fights back and makes the transition to an opposite color bishop ending. My evaluation is that black's connected passed pawns tip the balance in his favor. However, opposite color bishops are notoriously drawish as the defender uses blockade and wrong bishop themes to save the game. The question is how many technical difficulties can set white to black to avoid defeat?]

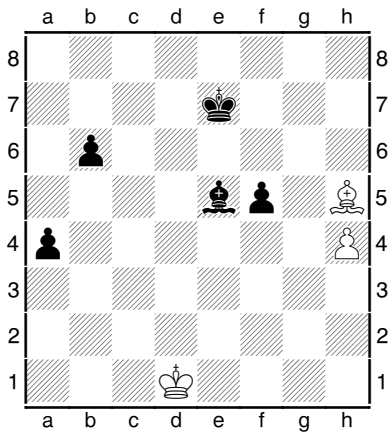
31...Bb2 32.Bc4 [The problem I see with Bc4 is that White wants his king in the fight quickly and preparing for Bxd4 with f3 save a tempo compared to the game continuation.]

[32.f3 Bxd4+ 33.Kf1 a5 34.Ke2 b5 35.Kd3 Bc5?! 36.Bc6 For example, 36...b4 37.g4± [#] White is closer to set up a light square blockade.]

32...Bxd4 33.Kf1 a5 34.Ke2 Ke7 35.f3 f5 36.g4 [White needs this pawn on g4 sooner (see variation at move 32) . Now g4 is not good because white opens up a second theater of operations on the kingside. Fighting on both flanks stretch white's forces and black can convert his extra material easily despite the presence of opposite color bishops.]

36...Kf6 37.h4 g6 38.Bd3 [38.Kd3 Be5 39.Bb5 Bg3 40.h5 gxh5 41.gxh5 Kg5]

38...a4 39.Bc4 h5 40.gxh5 gxh5 41.f4 Ke7 [with the idea Bd4–f6–h4.]
42.Kd1 Be3 43.Be2 Bxf4 44.Bxh5 Be5 [[#]]



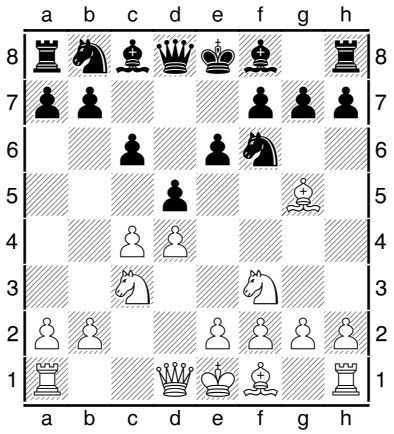
45.Be2 a3 46.Bc4 b5 47.Ba2 [This encounter is very instructive in three phases of a chess game. 1. In opening, the reader can learn the importance of knowing profoundly the kind of middlegame structure resulting from the aperture he is playing. Above all, players must be skilled in the methods for playing the preferred chess structures of their choice. 2. The middlegame this game is a great example about the dynamic way to play against the IQP. Black plays dynamically, instead of following the old method of blocking the IQP and slowly grind his opponent down. 3.This game shows two major aspects of modern chess. First, to defended difficult or losing positions by transitioning to a technical demanding endgame. Second, to win above the 2000 mark a chess player needs both a solid end -game foundation to convert complicated endgames and good time management skills.] **0–1**

(179) Ngo,Bach - Rajmohan,Vikram [D52]
Florida Scholastic State 2023 (1), 19.03.2023
[Ararat,Miguel]

1.d4 [White handles his queen effectively in this game.]

1...c6 2.Nf3 d5 3.c4 Nf6 4.Nc3 e6 [Black goes for the Semi-Slav and it is up to white to decide the type of middlegame. For instance, 5.cxd5 is the exchange variation and the pawn structure becomes a Carlsbad formation with well defined plans for each player. White can go for more complicated middlegames with 5.e3 (Meran) or 5.Bg5 the Anti-Meran gambit challenging black to take on c4.]

[4...dxc4 5.a4 Bf5 6.e3 e6 7.Bxc4 We have a Classical Slav.]
5.Bg5 [[#] Bach goes for the sharpest option, The Anti Meran gambit.]



5...Nbd7 6.e3 Bd6 [Black can play the Cambridge Spring Variation of the Queens Gambit Declined as Carlsen did against Gelfand, scoring a nice win with the black pieces.]

[6...Qa5 7.cxd5 Nxd5 8.Rc1 Nxc3 9.bxc3 Ba3 10.Rc2 b6 11.Bd3 Ba6 12.0–0 Bxd3 13.Qxd3 0–0 14.e4 0–1 (57) Gelfand,B (2740)-Carlsen,M (2872) London 2013]

7.Bd3 [If we use this position to select the 19 top games we discover that most of the black players that prefer 6...Bd6 over Qa5 are rated below 2400 than white. Importantly, black only scores 0.5 points out 19 with Bd6. In contrast, a similar game

sample shows that black players rated over 2400 favor 6...Qa5 and they score 10.5/19 . This data suggest that above master level black goes for the Cambridge Spring and below master level player prefer 6...Bd6]

7...0–0 8.0–0 dxc4 9.Bxc4 b5 10.Bd3 a6?! [Black loses the threat of the game and wasted a move. Instead, 10...Bb7 neutralizes white's plan with Ne4 because Black can execute the thematic maneuver Nxe4 and the exchange of dark square bishops that solve all black problems out of the opening. However, Black still losing in 17 moves if he gets carried away with "killing the game"]

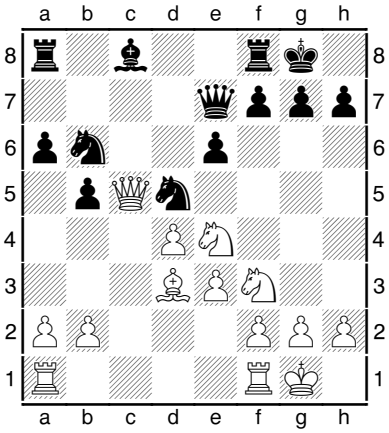
[10...Bb7 11.Ne4 Be7 12.Qc2 *(12.Bxf6 Bxf6 13.Rc1 e5 14.Nd6 Qb6 15.dxe5 Nxe5 16.Nxe5 Bxe5 17.Qh5* [#] 1–0 (17) Alonso Rosell,A (2509)-Bello Castano,D (1911) San Sebastian 2010. The double attack on h7 and the dark square bishop ends the game.*)* 12...Nxe4 13.Bxe7 Qxe7 14.Bxe4=]

11.Ne4 [11.Rc1 Qb6 12.e4 e5 13.Bxf6 taking with the knight runs into a pawn fork. 13...gxf6 14.Nh4 Nb8 15.Qh5 Kg7 16.dxe5 Bxe5 17.Kh1 Rg8 18.f4 Bxc3 19.Rxc3 Be6 20.e5 Nd7 21.exf6+ Kf8 22.Qh6+ Ke8 23.Be4 Rc8 24.Nf5 Kd8 25.Ne7 Qd4 26.Rxc6 Nxf6 27.Nxg8 Rxc6 28.Nxf6 Rc8 29.Qg5 Rc5 30.Qg8+ Ke7 31.Qe8+ 1–0 (31) Cesal,J (2200)-Kuba,J (2278) Czech Republic 2015]

11...Be7 12.Qc2 [12.Nxf6+ Nxf6 13.Ne5 Bb7 14.Qf3 is an alternative to Qc2, yet it is unnatural to post your queen on the gaze of an enemy bishop.]

12...Nd5 [12...Nxe4 Black can simplify the game with this thematic simplification at the cost of a pawn and fight for a draw. In any case you can get more promising positions out of the main variations of the Queens gambit declined. in a few words, Black's opening did not go his way. 13.Bxe7 Qxe7 14.Bxe4 Bb7 15.Bxh7+ Kh8 16.Bd3]

13.Qxc6 N7b6 14.Bxe7 Qxe7 15.Qc5 [[#]



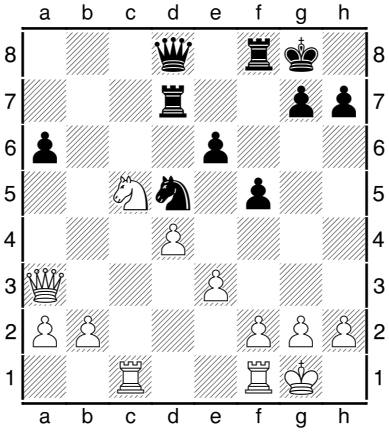
White starts a series of instructive queens moves that take the dynamic potential out of black's queenside units.]

15...Qd8 16.Rac1 Ra7 17.Qa3 [white vacates the c5 square for the knight and position the queen on a5 to prevent Nb6–c4 (queens will be exchange)]

17...Bd7 18.Qa5 Ne7 19.Ne5 [White has a material advantage, good squares for both knights on e5 and c5 and controls the only open file. White is winning.]

19...f6 20.Nxd7 Nxd7 21.Qa3 Nd5 22.Bxb5 f5 23.Bxd7 Rxd7 24.Nc5 [[#] This double attack on a6 and e6 seals black's fate. It is instructive how white wins this game without allowing any counterplay from his opponent.]

24...Re7 25.Qxa6 Qe8 26.Nd3 Qg6 27.Rc8 Rxc8 28.Qxc8+



[The control of the c file translates in this penetration to the back rank with the queen.]

28...Re8 29.Qd7 Nf6 30.Qc7 Ne4 31.Nf4 Qg5 32.Qd7 [Please notice that in the conversion of the advantage white does not try to promote a pawn or use his rook on f1. Bach goes for a direct attack on the queen exploiting the superior mobility of the queen! As a coach, I am guilty of encourage my students to use "all their pieces". This game shows that there is more that brute force in chess and it is call harmony.]

32...Re7 33.Qd8+ Kf7 [33...Re8 34.Qxe8#]

34.Nd3 g6 35.Qh8

1–0

(180) Davydov,Neryk (1861) - Patel,Soham (1679) [C50]
Southern Class, Orlando,FL 2023 (4), 19.03.2023 *[Ararat,Miguel]*

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 [At this point in the game white can direct the game to an active or calm middlegame. For instance, Davydov can play 4.b4, the Evans gambit creating open lines and a strong center as compensation for the pawn. Alternatively white can proceed as in the game and play a slow positional game. In the Evans gambit two games by Nakamura are clear example of the type of active middlegames this gambit creates. Nakamura - Anand 2011 and Nakamura Hess in 2012.]

4.0–0 [4.b4 Bxb4 5.c3 Ba5 *(5...Bd6 6.d4 Qe7 7.0–0 Nf6 8.Nbd2 0–0 9.Re1 Ba3 10.Nxe5 Nxe5 11.dxe5 Ne8 12.f4 Bxc1 13.Rxc1* 1–0 (33) Nakamura,H (2775)-Hess,R (2635) Saint Louis 2012*)* 6.d4 d6 7.Qb3 Qd7 8.dxe5 Bb6 9.a4 Na5 10.Qa2 Nxc4 11.Qxc4 Ne7 12.exd6 cxd6 with a dynamically balanced position with chances for both sides, thanks to the asymmetrical pawn structure and the bishop pair versus knight and bishop. 1/2–1/2 (36) Nakamura,H (2775)-Anand,V (2793) London 2014]

4...Nf6 5.d3 [The modern and more popular interpretation of the Italian opening. White wants a positional middlegame with a board full of pieces. The middlegame make take different shapes, from a full attack against the king to slowly conquering more space.]

5...d6 6.h3 h6 [Black avoids the pin after Bg5, nevertheless the move is not the only option. For example,]

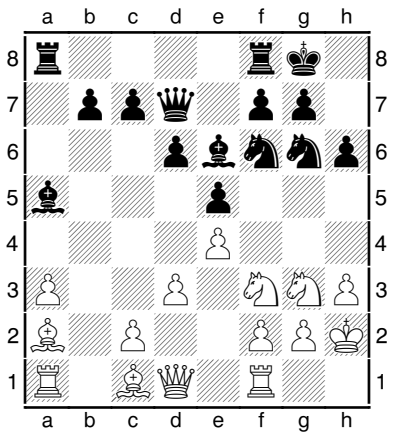
[6...Bb6 7.Nc3 Be6 8.Bb3 0–0 9.Be3 Bxe3 10.fxe3 Bxb3 11.axb3 d5 12.exd5 Nxd5 13.Qe1 Ndb4 14.Rc1 f5 0–1 (64) Rathnakaran,K (2453)-Mikhalevski,V (2592) Philadelphia 2008]

7.Nc3 0–0 8.a3 Ne7 9.Ne2 [Ne2 is not a bad move. Yet if white wants to play b4, the exchange of knight for bishop after Na4 is the standard plan in this position.]

[9.Na4 Bb6 10.Re1 Ng6 11.b4 Qe8 12.Nxb6 axb6 13.c3 Be6 14.Bxe6 Qxe6 15.a4 b5 16.Be3 1/2–1/2 (16) Abasov,N (2635) -Esipenko,A (2705) Chartres 2022]

9...Be6 10.b4 Bb6 11.Ba2 Ng6 12.Ng3 Qd7 13.Kh2 a5!? [This move highlights the downside of 9.Ne2, black attacks on the dark squares to force white to release the tension on the a2–g8 diagonal. White is not losing, but lost control of the position too early in the middlegame.]

14.bxa5 Bxa5 [[#]]



[14...Rxa5!? 15.Bxe6 fxe6 16.Bb2 Bc5 17.Nd2 Ra4 18.c4 Rfa8 with lasting pressure on the weak a3 pawn.]

15.Bxe6 fxe6 16.Bb2 [Bb2 defends the weak pawn on a3 originated after 14. bxa5, yet it is a positional mistake. The best square for this bishop is e3.]

[16.Be3 The dark square bishop positioned on e3 has more influence on both the flanks and the center than on the diagonal a1–h8. White's king can be under a lot of pressure after Ng6–f4 and Qf7–g6.]

16...Bb6 17.Nd2 Nf4 18.Nc4 Ba7 19.Qd2 [A very instructive moment in the game. Black has several good continuations such as Qf7 with the idea of Qg6 mounting a strong attack and b5 forcing the knight out of the stron c4 square. The best practical move is Qe7 because it has a hidden tactical idea that forces white to find the only move f3 protecting the g4 square. If white fails the game will be over.]

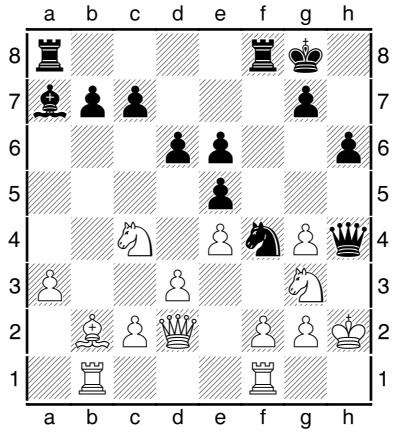
19...Qe7!? [19...Qf7 is a solid choice to build the attack against the white king. 20.Rab1 Qg6; 19...b5 This pawn push has not individual significance, but is playable as part of the Qf7 plan. 20.Ne3 Qe8 21.Rab1 Qg6]

20.Rab1?? [White makes a catastrophic blunder and the game is over. This is the main danger when a player wants to play positional chess out of 1.e4. Tactics can spring at any time and the positional player needs always to be tactically alert.]

[20.Qd1 h5; 20.f3 Qe8]

20...Ng4+ 21.hxg4 [21.Kg1 Qh4 black is going to capture on g3 thanks to the bishop on a7. White pay a heavy cost for allowing black's king side bishop to stay in the game (9.Na4, Nxb6) 22.Ne3 Bxe3 23.fxe3 Qxg3–+]

21...Qh4+ [[#]Try to calculate the forced win from this diagram.]



22.Kg1 Nh3+ 23.gxh3 Qxg3+ 24.Kh1 Qxh3+ 25.Kg1 Qxg4+ 26.Kh2 Rf3 27.Qe3 Bxe3

0–1

2023 Florida Collegiate Championship

By Derek Zhang

The first ever Florida State Collegiate Championship took place on April 16th, online on Chess.com. 24 players competed from six schools: the University of Florida (UF), the University of South Florida (USF), Florida State University (FSU), Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU), the University of Miami (UM), and Florida State College at Jacksonville (FSCJ). The tournament succeeded in its goal of bringing together college clubs from around the state, and plans are already underway for future in-person collegiate events!

Ryan Putney

USF dominated the championship section, with Ryan Putney (USF) winning the individual state title, Daniel Pimienta (USF) taking second, and USF winning the team state title by half a point over UF. Peyton Kromash (UF), Brandon Pina (FSU), and Mason Derwitsch (UF) tied for third, with FSU finishing as the third place team.

In the U1500 section, Christopher Krause (UF) took first with a perfect score, with Joseph Layrisson (FGCU) finishing second and Dylan Truver (FSU), Bharath Venkatachalam (UF), Jackson Sparks (FSU), and Xavier Banos (FGCU) tying for third. UF was the top team in the U1500, with FGCU and FSU taking second and third.

Christopher Krause

The evening blitz tournament was popular, with almost all of the morning tournaments' participants joined by a few additional players. Derek Zhang (UF) won first, Luke Lyle (FSCJ) took second, James Shen (UF) finished third, and Joseph Layrisson (FGCU), Daniel Pimienta (USF), and Dylan Truver (FSU) took the top three prizes in the U1500 category. UF was again the top team, with FSU taking second and USF and FGCU tying for third.

Congratulations to all of our participants, awardees, and especially our new state collegiate champions!

(197) Ryan Putney (1839) - James Shen [A36]
2023 Florida Collegiate Championship
https://lichess.org/study/Kvc (1.2)
[Derek Zhang]

[2023 Florida State Collegiate Champion Ryan Putney's first round win over the unrated but strong James Shen was his best game of the tournament, with no less than two brilliant moves identified by Chess.com's Game Review!]

1.c4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.g3 Nf6 4.Bg2 d6 5.d3 g6 [The Symmetrical English, a deceptively calm start to a brilliant attacking game.]

6.e4 Bg7 7.Nge2 0–0 8.0–0 Rb8 9.Be3 a6 10.a4 e5 11.f4 [Ryan shows his attacking intentions. Best for James was Ng4 or exf4, but he makes the mistake of allowing f5.]

11...b6?! [11...exf4 12.gxf4 Ng4 13.Bd2 f5=; 11...Ng4 12.Bd2 exf4 13.gxf4 f5=]

12.h3?! [Ryan unnecessarily spends a move preventing Ng4, but James gives him another opportunity to play f5 and Ryan obliges on the second opportunity.]

12...Nd4?! 13.f5 gxf5 14.Bg5! Be6? [Be6 simply wastes a tempo after exf5.]

[14...fxe4?? 15.Nxe4 Nf5 16.g4+–]

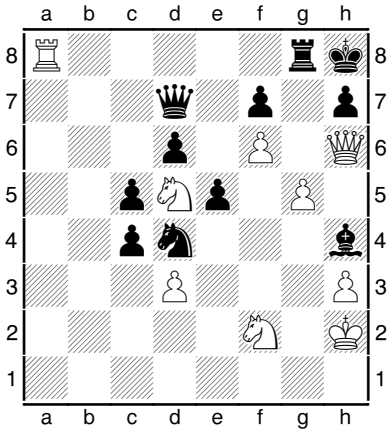
15.exf5 Bc8 16.g4 Qe8 17.Ng3 Bb7 18.Bxb7 Rxb7 19.Bxf6 [Eliminating the defender of the e4, d5, and h5 squares, allowing white's knights to run rampant over black's kingside.]

19...Bxf6 20.Nge4 Qd8 21.Nd5 Bh4 22.f6 [Cutting off black's bishop from the rest of black's army. The bishop will be lost, sooner or later.]

22...Kh8 23.g5 Qd7 24.Kh2 b5 [Black's best attempt at counterplay, but it comes too late.]

25.axb5 axb5 26.Qh5 bxc4 27.Qh6!? [Qxh4 is technically better according to the engine, but Qh6 wins the most style points.]

27...Rxb2+ 28.Rf2 Rxf2+ 29.Nxf2 Rg8 30.Ra8!!



30...Nf5 [30...Rxa8?? 31.Qg7#]

31.Qf8!! Bg3+ [31...Rxf8 32.Rxf8#]

32.Kh1 Ne7 33.Qg7# [A flashy finish to an excellent first game of the tournament from the eventual collegiate champion!]

1–0

GM Sam Shankland at UF

By Thomas Slaten

On April 1st and 2nd, the Gator Chess Club hosted the first grandmaster to visit the University of Florida since the days of Gabriel Schwartzman: GM Sam Shankland. Shankland is a US Olympiad gold medalist and 2018 US champion who at the time of writing is ranked 30th in the world. Shankland came for the electrifying two-day event, hosting a simul, all-comers blitz challenge, and various lectures. The event saw nearly a hundred participants, with plenty of action in the simul.

Far from being complete domination by Shankland (excluding, of course, the author's abysmal showing), Shankland was on the brink of defeat in several games. One such game was played by Aidan Burchard against the GM.**GM Sam Shankland (2787) - Aidan Burchard (1646)** Simul 02.04.2023

1.e4 d6 [For a bit of context, Aidan's chess.com username is Mr. Pirc, so he was delighted to be able to play his favorite opening - the pirc - against Sam]

2.d4 Nf6 3. Nc3 g6 4. Be3 c6 5. F3 b5 6. Bd3 [The position is solid for both sides, though white controls the center and has a slight development advantage.

6. … Nbd7 7. Nge2 Bb7 8. Qd2 Qc7 9. O-O Bg7 [Now that Sam had castled, Aidan was free to castle as well]

10. Bh6 O-O 11. Bxg7 Kxg7 12. f4 e5 13. a3?
[Sam makes a rare mistake with 13. a3, as 13. dxe5 is a far superior move. 13. dxe5 avoids the d4 pawn being pinned by the queen and being a permanent target for the moves to come. Luckily for Sam, Aidan didn't capitalize by playing Qb6. However, a serious change in momentum is to come.]

13. … a6 14. Rf3? [Here, 14. …exd4 is crushing, with no real response to black's central pawn dominance. Taking the pawn with the knight will lose after 14. … exd4 15. Nxd4 c5, and one of 16. Nd2 c4 trapping the bishop, or 16. Nb3 c4 forking the knight and bishop]

14. exd4 15. Nxd4 [The hype train officially departs the station at supersonic speeds, as Shankland will be losing a minor piece with optimal play by Aidan.]

15. … c5 16.e5 Ng8? [The hype train starts to slow, with speeds comparable to a turn of the century cargo train. 16. …dxe5 is the best alternative, as it prevents counterplay by white after 16. … dxe5 17. fxe5 Qxe5. 16. … cxd4 is also a viable option, as 16. … cxd4 17. exf6 Nxf6 leaves the rook threatened by the b7 bishop and the c3 knight is on the brink of capture.]

17. Nf5+ [To quote the great GM Ben Finegold: "rawr".]

17. …gxf5 18. Rg3+ kh8 19. Bxf5 dxe5? [Black trades into a fairly even endgame, though white is a pawn down.]

20. Qxd7 Qxd7 21. Bxd7 exf4 22. Rd3 Nf6 23. Bh3 Rad8 24. Rad1 Rxd3 25. Rxd4 Re8 [Black holds a slight advantage but the position is drawn.]

26. Kf2 Ne4+ 27. Nxe4 Bxe4 28. Rd2 f5 29. c3 Re7 30. Rd6 Ra7 31. g3 fxg3+ 32. hxg3 b4 [Although black has an extra pawn, the position is dead even, as the queenside pawns will get traded off and white's g pawn will prevent black from advancing his pawns any further. Here the hype train gets delayed at its station indefinitely, with a lone pawn blocking the tracks. Now the trades begin and the position simplifies to a draw]

33. cxb4 cxb4 43. axb4 Rb7 35. Rd4 a5 36. bxa5 ½-½

Central Region Report

By NM Andrew Rea, Central RVP

Scholastic Championship (Continued from page 4)

Lets take a brief pause now to note why we have 'Under' sections in the next four groups. This is a Tournament Novelty introduced in New York City some 15 years ago, giving more players reason to play- players are aware that most of the participants will vie for the very top, but if one category can be made into two, there can be more incentive. Add in the team element, and it can be seen there are typically more players who choose to play. Regards the team competition, these champions will be noted later in this recap. For now, on to K-3 u600. Here we have 2 players at 5/5, Michael Wang and Asa Bodlak, chased hard by 7 others at 4/5! Congrats to Michael and Asa, with Michael narrowly having the better tiebreak. Re tiebreaks, please be aware there is not yet a perfect tiebreak system, and that the Rating Report posted on US Chess is just that, a rating report- the players are not listed in tiebreak order, they are listed in rating order.

If K-3 was close, how to designate K-3 Championship? Maybe not quite off the charts, but 6 players tied for first at 4/5! Well played by Yi Sha, Vivian Mulay, Aakash Jani, Ryan Ratliff, Damian Alexander, Addison Baumstark, with Yi Sha landing overall first on tiebreak. As with our other sections, our players get to realize that Plan A is not always correct and have to then navigate on the fly through plenty of resistance.... and then do it again, rinse and repeat! Of course in some instances a player might have had one oversight in the whole tournament and as a result there goes the perfect marks, ouch! Of course our players, in this section and the others, learn early and often to deal with adversity at the board.

It isn't easy, but our players typically showed strong perseverance, ready for that next round- and then for the next event! In the K-5 u700 Section, it would seem like smooth sailing for Nicholas Vu, 5/5! Of course its five wins in the box score, but given there were 4 players at 4/5, its fairly likely there were some nervy moments for Nicholas- and we can see he steered clear of the obstacles when all was said and done. Similarly in the K-5 Championship group, one player at 5/5, Riyaan Datta- of course this was anything but easy as there was one player at 4.5/5 and 3 at 4/5.

As we move to K-8 u1000, the players are stronger, more experience- and it is not getting any easier to score points, seeing as the sense of danger is better with experience, as is recognition of opportunity. This section may well have been the most closely contested- 11 players at 4/5, close, no cigar..... as we have 3 players at 4.5/5! Congrats to Parvati Chakrabarti, Catherine Jiang, and Vincent Hubacheck, with the better tiebreak going to Parvati. Well played by our trio! Regards the K-8 Championship, this was also highly contested, with Advait Nair finishing alone at 4.5/5, holding off the charges of the 6 players at 4/5! Nary a dull moment in these sections!

K-12 u1100 had one player, Cole Carin, at 5/5, very well played! He needed that big score as there were 2 at 4.5/5 and 7 others at 4/5. Speaking of close competition, on to the K-12 Championship, with various and sundry Fide Masters, National Masters, Experts..... and as with other sections, there are lower rated players who also played well and scored well! In the end, FM Bach Ngo won the K-12 Championship at 4.5/5 , with 6 players (not all Masters!) chasing hard, chasing skillfully, at 4/5.

On to the Team Competition- lets note that the pairings are done on an individual basis, with team standings then gleaned from how the players score. Yes, players from same team can be paired against each other, though this tends to be the exception. From our 9 sections, there were dozens of teams- another way for players not able to compete for first place to still contribute to the event by dusting off some early mishap and score points later to help their team. In the K-1 Championship, it is Oak Hall School, in from Gainesville, scoring the Team Championship- well done by Mihai Holcomb, Leighann Hood, Mark Wang, and Suraj Jani.

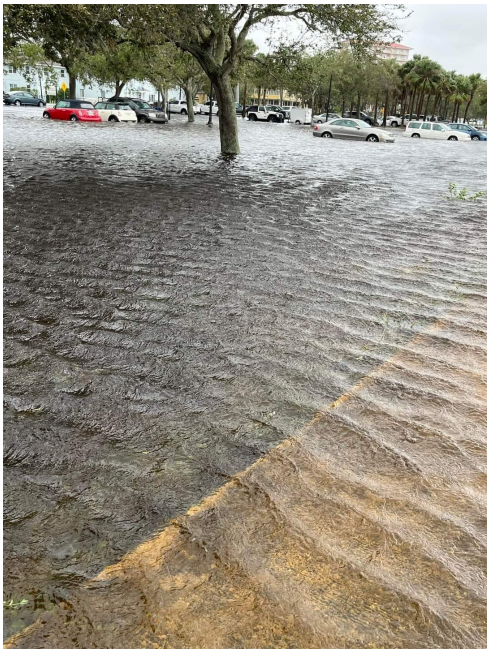
Oak Hall evidently has a strong chess program (Editor's note: and the evidence is strong), as they also won the K-3 Team Championships! K-3 u600, they were led by Julian Moguillansky, Myka Solberg, Emma Flores, and Rhett West. In the K-3 Team Championship, Oak Hall was well represented by Aakash Jani, Damian Alexander, Celine Chen, and Addison Baumstark - well played!

Oak Hall also led the way in the K-5 sections! K-5 u700 it is Nicholas Vu, Asher Austin, Jack Eisenmenger, and Aayan Patel leading the way, while in the K-5 Championship Oak Hall was well represented by Sophie Li, Ishir Kumar, Henry Thomas, and Curtis Hood- again, congratulations, well played!

K-8 u1000 Team Championship was won by Divine Savior, making the trip north from Miami- well done by Karla Morales, David Cabrera, Evan Bello, and Roshni Alvarez. As for the K-8 Team Champion, say hello- and more congratulations!- to Abraham Lincoln HS, in from Gainesville. Brian Bird, Nick Liu, Ezra Sawicki, and Garrick Wu, again, well played! And now for our K-12 u1100, a Champion effort by Lake Nona HS, Orlando! Bhagyesh Jethwani, Kenneth Wu, Dylan Nguyen, and Aaron Storcher scoring this honor, well done! We close the team event with congratulations to Buchholz HS, Gainesville, well played by Bach Ngo, Jason Shen, Andrew Xing, and Ahan Mishra.

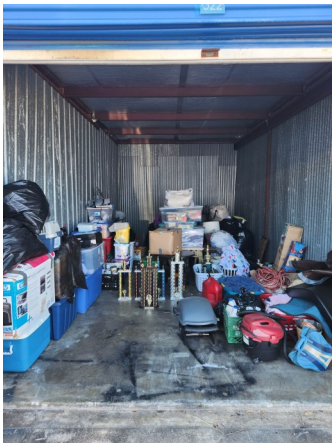
Best wishes to all of our participants, may thanks to the event Organizer, Kevin Pryor- there is always much happening in advance and during the event that is best left not disturbing the players so that the players can maintain concentration on their games! Its not a one person operation, there were several other contributors, they know who they are- I prefer the focus to be on our players, as there is not an event without them- thanks, and wait til next year!

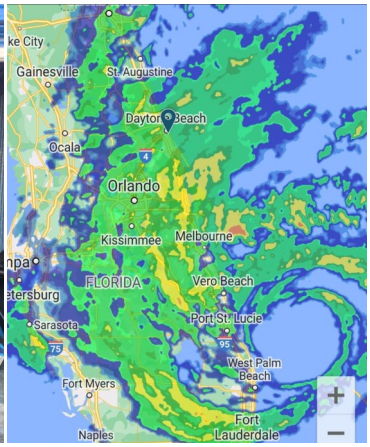
Putting the Pieces Back Together
How a "Never Resign" approach led the Volusia County Chess Club through Hurricane Ian
By Ray Ratliff Northeast RVP



In September 2022, Hurricane Ian ravished parts of Florida. Many homes were destroyed, lives were lost and normal everyday life was drastically changed. Anthony "Tony" Cipollina, Volusia County Chess Club owner, lived through that carnage. He recalls at one point standing on his bed holding his wife and 3 cats just to escape the flooding. The damage to his home and belongs were devastating. In chess terms, he had lost his queen and the game was fully in his opponents favor. I spoke with Anthony about how he was able to pull himself up and start the process of getting back on his feet. I'll never forget his words "Just like in chess Ray, I never resign!" He salvaged what he could and started the slow process of putting the pieces back together. He has lived in this area his entire life and was not going to let this storm change that. When I asked about the chess club, he quick responded by saying "We only missed one Tuesday meet up". He knew that his club members needed chess as an escape. A sense of normalcy in all of the chaos. He pushed his pieces forward.

Today, his Tuesday meet-up attendance has double and he is hosting major events again like his upcoming Blitz Championship. I have heard the saying "life is like chess" and in this case, nothing could be further from the truth. I commend Tony for his resiliency and determination through this life altering ordeal. Events like hurricane Ian remind us of the importance of community and togetherness. Over the board and in life, you can find yourself in seemingly impossible situations that push you to your limits. Like Tony, continue to push your pieces forward and never ever resign. Thank you Tony.





If you would like to help the Volusia Chess Club put their pieces back together, you can donate on their website http://www.volusiacountychessclub.com/ or you can contact Tony at tonyhtms@gmail.com.

Unearthing South Florida's Thriving Chess Community:
From Hidden Gems to Budding Talent

By Matthew Kolcz, South RVP

South Florida is renowned for its sun-kissed beaches and dynamic culture — but did you know it also boasts a flourishing chess community that encourages friendly competition? Alongside several distinguished chess clubs throughout the region, there are some lesser-known gems eager to welcome avid players.

Miramar

One such hidden treasure is Miramar Chess Club (https://miramarchessclub.com/), founded by Roberto L. Montanez with the goal of connecting passionate enthusiasts within a congenial environment. Built on principles of good sportsmanship and community spirit, this club is poised for growth as word spreads among local players.

If you're seeking an exhilarating event while engaging with fellow members from our vibrant community, look no further than the Rapid Chess Tournament hosted by Miramar Chess Club on May 28th. Registration is hassle-free; simply head over to chessregister.com!

Miami

For those interested in more established clubs offering regular tournaments year-round, Miami School of Chess (https://miami-school-of-chess.negocio.site/) will surely impress. Located at 300 Southwest 107th Avenue Suite 205 in Miami, this reputable club often hosts Quads events and weekend competitions – check out their listings on chessregister.com!

Miami School of Chess sets itself apart by occasionally hosting prestigious Norm tournaments that captivate top talent from across the region.

South Miami

Another esteemed name in South Florida's thriving chess scene is South Miami Chess Club (https://www.southmiamichessclub.com/), catering mainly to scholastic initiatives. Owned by Diego Milla and featuring expert tutelage from International Master Alejandro Moreno, this club provides an excellent platform for young chess enthusiasts to hone their skills under expert guidance.

The ever-growing popularity of these clubs attests to South Florida's enthusiasm, dedication, and community spirit in fostering a thriving chess scene. With Miramar Chess Club advocating for friendly competition and camaraderie, Miami School of Chess attracting accomplished players via their top-notch tournaments, and South Miami Chess Club nurturing young prodigies — it's no wonder that this southern paradise has become a haven for chess aficionados!

North West Regional Report

By Derek Zhang, Northwest RVP

Sojourns, Startups, and Stalemate Studies

As my relatively brief time in Florida and on the FCA board draws to a close this month, I would be remiss if I did not mention how impressed I am with the strength of the chess community in Florida. Florida is a very diverse and geographically dispersed state, and yet there are chess players meeting for games on every weekend in every corner of the state. In the northwest region, two recent startup clubs deserve special recognition: Jacob Sperber's Capital City Chess Club in Tallahassee and Shaun Blevins and Zachary Bruley's Project Chess Club in Milton. Jacob has run three editions of the Capital City Open with increasing attendance each time (no easy feat, as many organizers will attest to!), and Shaun and Zachary recently organized the first Blackwater Chess Championship in Milton with an impressive 31 players in attendance. Organizers like Jacob, Shaun, Zachary, and dozens of others across the northwest region and the state are a critically important part of our chess community.

This quarter, in lieu of any tournament recaps or lengthy reports, I've included a few of my favorite form of chess puzzles: studies. Studies are different from most puzzles in that they are composed or created instead of taken from real games, and as such they often offer solvers an opportunity to develop their calculation skills through uniquely creative (and often beautiful) solutions. **The studies below are all stalemate studies, all white to play and draw and ordered in difficulty from easiest to most difficult.** Solutions are provided later on in this issue. I would recommend giving yourself at least 10 minutes on a study before looking at the solution. Think creatively and please enjoy!

(Editor's Note: Derek, I want to extend the thanks of the entire FCA Board of Directors for your time and effort spent as the Northwest Regional V.P. Your leadership and work ethic have been greatly appreciated and will be missed. We wish you well as you move on to the next chapter in life's journey.)

Study 1 (Easy)

Study 2 (Medium)

Study 3 (Medium)

Study 4 (Hard)

Northwest Florida Chess Clubs:

Capital City Chess Club (Tallahassee) - https://www.thechessdrum.net/blog/2022/12/18/2022-capital-city-chess-open-tallahassee-fl/

FSU Chess Club (Tallahassee) - ChessClubFSU@gmail.com, Regular meetings on Friday nights from 5-6:30 on Landis Green

Gator Chess Club (Gainesville) - https://gatorchessclub.com, Regular meetings on Thursday nights from 6-9 in Larsen Hall Room 234

Panama City Chess Club - pcbchess@yahoo.com

Pensacola Chess Club - lifemasteraj@yahoo.com

Perkins Restaurant Chess Meetup (Gainesville) - Regular meetings on Friday nights from 7-11 at Perkins Restaurant

Project Chess Club (Milton) - ShaunBlevinsBBB@gmail.com or Zachary.Bruley@gmail.com

Tallahassee Chess Club - http://www.tallahasseechess.com, Regular meetings on Saturday afternoons at the Black Dog Cafe at Lake Ella

SOLUTIONS
Study 1 – 1. Rh5 d5 (Qxh5 is stalemate) 2. Rh2 d4 (Qxh2 is stalemate) 3. Rh5 d3 (Qxh5 is, again, stalemate) 4. Rxh6+ Kxh6 ½-½ by stalemate
Study 2 – 1. Nc7 c3 2. Ne6 c2 3. Nd4 c1=Q 4. Nf3+ gxf3 ½-½ by stalemate (other ways of bringing the knight to f3 in four moves are also correct)
Study 3 – 1. Bf6+ Kb1 2. Bb2 Kc2 (Qxb2 or Kxb2 are both stalemate) 3. Bxa1 Kb1 4. Kb3 Kxa1 5. Kc2 a4 6. Kc1 a3 7. Kc2 ½-½ by stalemate
Study 4 – 1. Nf2 Bxf2 2. Rh1+ Be1 3. Rh2 d1=Q 4. Rb2+ Kc1 (If Ka1, Ra2+ will either lead to a perpetual or eventually force Kc1) 5. Rb1+ Kxb1 ½-½ by stalemate

West Regional Report

By Timotey Gospodinov, West RVP

Chess, Chess, Chess!!!
Chess has never been more popular in West Florida than now. Every weekend we have a chess tournament (some weekends we have a couple tournaments at West Florida). We have more and more chess clubs. One of the strongest players at West Florida Corey Acor created a new club and began to run monthly chess tournaments. Here is more information Corey sent to me:

Chasing Checkmate Chess Tournament is a new dual rated G/30;d5 (standard rating and quick rating) tournament being held in Tampa each month. The tournament is run by Fide Master Corey Acor and his wife Amber. There are three sections to choose from including a unrated beginner K-5 section, K-12 open rated section, and a adult open rated cash prize section. The cash prizes depend on how many players sign up but 60 percent payout is guaranteed. Cash prizes b/20 players: 1st: $200 2nd: $100 3rd: $50 Top u1500: $50 Top u1200: $50. The scholastic sections play for trophies and all children will receive a participation prize. This tournament is growing fast over the last two months and space will be limited to first 80 players to sign up. You can find more information about future tournaments as well as the sign up form on www.chasingcheckmate.com. This tournament is also listed on chessregister.com.

We have many chess clubs at schools. My wife, Petrunka Gospodinova, who is a teacher at Riverview, created a chess club at her school. Here is what one magazine published about her initiative:

GIUNTA CHESS ACADEMY CLUB
By Mrs. Gospodinova

The click of the timer as you select your next move and strategically watch your opponent, it's all a dance, a dance that makes up the name of chess. I found out that many of my English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students don't do well at speaking perfect English, but they know the "dance of chess" well. I would love to see more young people playing chess and staying focused with their life. We are all informed of the benefits of playing chess, but most importantly it exercises both sides of the brain, improves concentration and helps children realize the consequences of their actions. Growing up playing the game turned into a hobby for me, and I would like to give a chance for my Second Language Learners at Giunta Middle School to get exposed to the game. The beauty of chess is very complex – there are more than 200 billion possible board positions; each one has infinite potential outcomes. I like to inspire my ESOL students so that one day they can challenge themselves and succeed. I am a mother of two boys who both became National Chess players and helped me improve my chess skills. So, for the second semester I opened my classroom during lunchtime and students can come to play chess. We chose a name for our Chess Club - Giunta Chess Academy (GCA Club). I do some tutorial chess as well. I guide them with resources, and I enjoy watching them exercise their brain while playing. I want to teach young people to refocus their mindset and to win and lose with grace.

I want to finish my article about the Saint Petersburg Chess Club. Right now, the club runs tournaments every Saturday, and we also meet every Tuesday and Friday for a casual game and every Sunday for group chess lessons. This summer, Saint Petersburg Chess will offer a 7-week half-day chess and art camp. Visit the club website for more information about chess in Saint Petersburg: https://chessclubjoy.webs.com/.

One of the biggest TV networks in Tampa Bay visited the Saint Petersburg Chess Club and made a movie about the club. A part of this movie was the interview with National Champion and Florida State Champion and member of this club, Lyubomir Gospodinov. Here is what Bay News 9 said about the club:
What You Need To Know
• The St. Pete Chess Club is open to all
• The club is the longest running for a single location
• A member shares his story

Lyubomir Gospodinov knows that dance and strategy well. Growing up playing this game, he made it more than a hobby, going on to win a national chess championship in 8th grade and a Florida state championship. He attributes much of that success to the chess club he grew up playing at, the St. Pete Chess Club. “I remember coming here in 9th and 10th grade of high school and I would play for fun on Fridays and even had a chess coach here,” Lyubomir said. Playing chess at the St. Pete Chess Club, a spot where his own father, also an avid chess player, is currently the chess club President. Showcasing that the love of this game is a family affair. “I appreciate now that I’ve moved back to St. Pete permanently after college, that I have the opportunity to come here and see old and new faces and play games and even challenge myself and play in some tournaments.”

The St. Pete Chess Club first opened its doors in 1930 in the very same building they still gather in today. It's the oldest chess club to remain in the same place in the United States. The club has had international grand masters play here, like Sammy Reshevsky, Bobby Fischer, and Larry Christiansen, just to name a few.

You can try your hand at this game alongside the greats during their open chess play days or even enter into one of their tournaments that has been taking place for the past 30 years. “You’d be surprised, you can meet a lot of people younger, older, or your own age.. you can make some really great friends and it’s just a great environment. We are very inclusive,” Lyubomir said. The St. Pete Chess club is open on Tuesdays, Fridays, and Sundays for open play. They also host a number of tournaments and lectures.

Florida Senior Open

By Mike Moschos

The Florida Senior Open was has on April 29th and April 30th at the Laurel Manor Recreational Center in The Villages. The tournament consisted of two sections an Open and a U1800 with a total of 43 players. This tournament provided an opportunity for aged 50+ to play prior to the Florida State Senior Championship which will be held on May 27-28 in Boca Raton, Fl. The winner of the championship will be the Florida representative to the Irwin Tournament of Senior Champions held at the US Open.

Laurel Manor Recreational Center at The Villages.

Tony Reed— U1800 Winner

The winner of the Open section of the Senior Open was **Constantine Xanthos** with 3.5 points out of a possible 4.0. The second place finisher was Jonathan **David Sarfati**. The U1800 winner was Anthony (Tony) Reed finishing with 4.0 points out of a possible 4.0. There was a 6 way tie for second place with player accumulating 3.0 points.

Constantine Xanthos at age 76 is still a highly competitive chess player as demonstrated by winning the2023 The Florida Senior Open, 2022 Florida State Senior Championship. The following are **excerpts** from the Sun Sentinel PUBLISHED: **March 10, 1991** at 5:00 a.m. | UPDATED: September 25, 2021 at 1:41 p.m. entitled "NAPLES WINS GIVE PLAYER MASTER RATING"

Charles Hatherill (National TD) & Constantine Xanthos

Constantine Xanthos played his first chess tournament 24 years ago. On Tuesday, he achieved a master rating. "I just received my new rating, 2204," Xanthos said. Anything over 2200 is considered master — a level attained by fewer than 3 percent of all tournament players in the United States. Xanthos, of Hillsboro Beach, broke the 2200 rating barrier with four straight victories at the Naples Winter Open Tournament ."I won the first prize of $80 and raised my rating from 2193 — the first time I've had a master rating," Xanthos said. His goal is not only to increase his rating, but also to become a World Chess Federation master by playing opponents with international ratings.

Today we bring you one of Xanthos' games in the Naples tournament, a victory against veteran tournament player Robert Eastwood, a former Florida champion. In an ending with Bishops of opposite colors — normally drawish — Xanthos forced the victory with precise play. "We had equal material and Bishops of opposite color, but Black was paralyzed and positionally lost because of his weakness on the dark squares, and my King's invulnerability," he said.

Xanthos' 36. Rb7 was decisive. If 36..Kg7 37. Qf6+ wins.
And if 36…Kg8 37. Qb1 Rxb7 38. axb7 Qb8 39. Bc7! wins.

Interior—Laurel Manor Recreational Center

White (EQ) Xanthos Black (EQ) Eastwood

1.d4 d5 2.e3 Nf6 3.c4 c6 4.Nc3 e6 5.f4 Bd6 6.Nf3 Ne4 7.Bd3 f5 8.0-0 0-0 9.c5 Bc7 10.Ne2 Nd7 11.b4 Ndf6 12.a4 Bd7 13.Ne5 b6 14.Ba3 bxc5 15.bxc5 Rb8 16.h3 Ba5 17.Bxe4 Nxe4 18.Qd3 Rf6 19.Rab1 Be8 20.Rxb8 Qxb8 21.Rb1 Qc8 22.Bb4 Bc7 23.a5 Bxe5 24.fxe5 Rf7 25.a6 Re7 26.Be1 Bh5 27.Nf4 Bf7 28.Rb3 g5 29.Ne2 Bh5 30.Kh2 Rg7 31.Ng3 Bg6 32.Nxe4 fxe4 33.Qe2 h5 34.Ba5 Kh7 35.Qf1 Rf7 36.Rb7 Rxb7 37.axb7 Qxb7 38.Qf6 Qf7 39.Qxg5 a6 40.Be1 Bf5 41.Qd8 Bg6 42.Bh4 Qe8 43.Qc7+ Kh6 44.Bf6 Qg8 45.Qxc6 Bf5 46.Qxa6 h4 47.Bxh4 Kh5 48.Bg3 Qg5 49.Bf4 Qg7 50.c6 Bg4 51.Qb7 Qg6 52.hxg4+ Kxg4 53.Qe7 Kf5 54.Qf6 Black Resigns

Florida Senior Open Game :

White :Jonathan David Sarfati (2237 P20)
Black : Constantine Xanthos (2213)

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 e6 4.Nc3 f5 5.Bf4 Nf6 6.e3 Be7 7.Qc2 O-O 8.h3 Ne4 9.Bd3 Nd7 10.O-O h6 11.Rab1 Qe8 12.b4 a6 13.a4 a5 14.b5 Nxc3 15.Qxc3 Bb4 16.Qc2 cxb5 17.cxd5 bxa4 18.dxe6 Nb6 19.Bxf5 Bxe6 20.Bh7+ Kh8 21.Ne5 Rf6 1/2-1/2

2nd Place Finisher

Jonathan David Sarfati

"Jonathan David Sarfati is a FIDE Master in chess, and achieved a draw against former world champion Boris Spassky during a tournament in Wellington in 1988, and was New Zealand's national chess champion in 1987–88.

Although tied with Rey Casse for first place in the Australian Junior Championship of 1981, he was not eligible to share the title as he was a resident of New Zealand at the time. He represented New Zealand in three Chess Olympiads: the 27th in Dubai in 1986, the 28th in Thessaloniki in 1988, and the 30th in Manila in 1992. He also represented New Zealand on top board at the 5th Asian Teams in Delhi. "Provided by Wikipedia

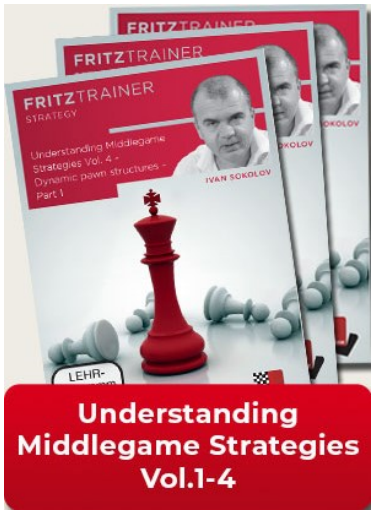
Book Reviews

by Miguel Ararat

In this edition of floridaCHESS, I will review three books and a DVD set

Understanding Middlegame Strategies Vol 1-4 by FST Ivan Sokolov (ChessBase)
The Hidden Laws of Chess by IM Nick Maatman (New in Chess)
Rock Solid Chess by GM Tiviakov and FM Gökbulut (New in Chess)
Beating the Hedgehog System by WFM Hanna Ivan-Gal & IM Hazai (New in Chess)

The main topics in all materials under review are pawn structures and the positional factors that influence them. Two of the key positional factors associated with pawn structures are space and piece exchanges. Amateur players will benefit from all the books. Advance players and amateurs that play the English and the Sicilian will get the most out of Sokolov's DVD and Beating the Hedgehog System.

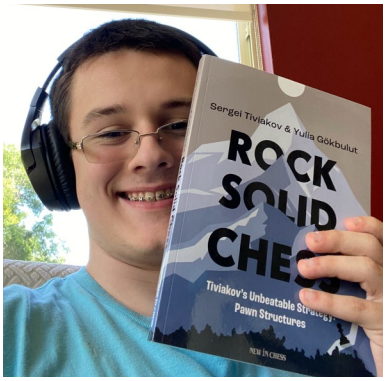


Understanding Middlegame Strategies Vol 1-4 by Dutch GM and Chess Trainer Ivan Sokolov. In this set of DVDs, the author discusses several middlegame themes such as pawn play, decision making, the advantage of space and the practical approach to the game among other themes. Sokolov is considered a great calculator by my former chess coach Lars Bo Hansen. However, in this work Solokov does not rely on calculation as the main resource to understand and play a chess position. Sokolov explains very model game in detail and critical positions are assessed in words and variations. Sokolov's explanations are not "nuggets" of chess wisdom but a way to clarify and show how to play for and against a particular positional feature.

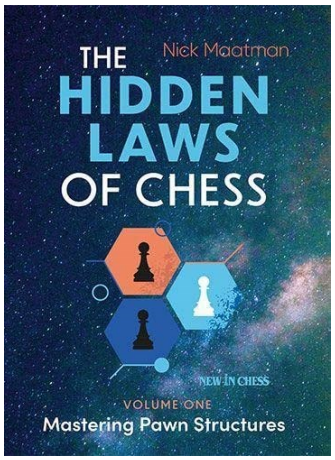
From **Understanding Middlegame Strategies Vol 1-4**, I absorbed enough material in one session to impress my trainer from **Ivanchuck Chess Academy**. During one lesson, we were working on a complicated middlegame from a Sicilian Defense. I managed to find several viable alternatives to the moves played in the game. Although precise calculation was required to analyze the game identifying the relevant factors in the position (dark squares and weak king) helped me to understand what was happening in a chaotic position. I explained to my trainer that our game was similar to Anand – Nikolic, 1997 and the key was to play against black weak dark squares. My coach was surprised that I was talking about a structure coming from a French Defense in a Sicilian middlegame, raise his eyebrow and searched the game online. My coach went over the Anand – Nikolic game, acknowledged my answer and added the game to his coaching file. Sokolov's vast experience as a player and coach helps to make the material in **Understanding Middlegame Strategies Vol 1-4** understandable and useful to chess players rated 1800 and up. Easy 5 stars.

In **Rock Solid Chess** Sergey Tiviakov and Yulia Gökbulut explain pawn structures under the premise that understanding chess by the study of typical positions has more practical value that following a chess engine recommendation. **Rock Solid Chess** provides the reader with high-quality examples and special playing methods associated with a particular pawn structure. Examples are explained and assessed based on the experience and skills of a top GM. The evaluation of the positions according to Tiviakov's skill instead of computer evaluation is one of the strongest features of Rock Solid Chess. Amateur players are in most cases unable to discern when a computer suggestion is beyond human or practical feasibility resulting in confusion. Tiviakov and Gökbulut show the amateur why and how to develop their own analytical and evaluation skills to get better practical chances in their games.

A fun fact about my own experience while reviewing this book. Last year, **ScholasticChess.org** invited me to coach their top players on a series of eight Sundays. The game Karpov – Sax, 1983 was featured in two of the training sessions on open files. A year forward, I finish reading my review copy of **Rock Solid Chess** and recommended it to one of my top students from Jacksonville. To my surprise, he pointed out the Karpov's game mentioned above after more than a year! I am happy about three things regarding this story. One, at least couple of the students out of eight suggested 13…0-0. Second, a game can be the example of different themes to different trainers and finally, we analyzed extensively with the kids the decision to keep or not the black king in the center which turned out to be a great coaching point. **Rock Solid Chess** will teach you a lot about pawn structures and how to think on your own while evaluating chess positions. As a result of working with this book you can become a better chess player and chess coach. A must read this summer after the school is over. :)



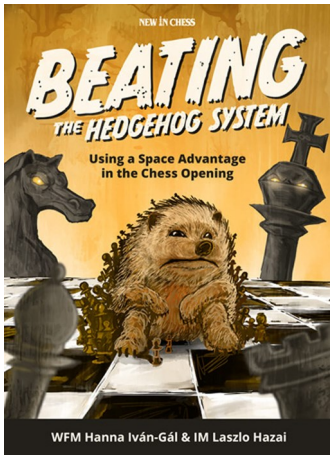
North Florida scholastic chess standout, Brooks Chandler.



The Hidden Laws of Chess Volume One by IM Nick Maatman is a book on pawn structures and several aspects that influence their evaluation such as space and pieces exchanges. Maatman is an international chess master and trainer with degrees in business and philosophy. The author annotate forty-five master games as well as seventy-four training positions blended with clear explanations (90% in words) to make an amateur friendly book about pawn structures.

As the book progresses, the reader learns about the fundamental pawn structures and how to play them according to the "hidden laws of chess." Maatman, together with Tiviakov and Gökbulut **in Rock Solid Chess**, warn the reader of the danger of following the chess engine evaluations without questioning it. For example, Maatman makes a good case about the misleading valuations of a chess engine in openings like the Indian Kings where the machine overestimates space. The author supports his point of view with the game Gelfand- Nakamura, Bursa 2010. At move 12.f3 the author indicates why the computer assessment of the move does not reflect the practical value of the position. This is the only game out of forty-five in which the author enters the nitty-gritty of a single chess game with a significant number of variations.

The author's discussion of the role of space and all the chess areas it influences is worth the price of the book. This key feature of the book is very important to developing players in the 1400 – 1600 rating range. Improving players have difficulty grasping the concept of space in chess, particularly, when a space advantage is relevant and when is not and to what extent the computer evaluation reflects the practical value of space in a given chess position.



It is important to note that advanced players also have blind spots when it comes to the importance of space in a given position. As mentioned by Sokolov in **Understanding Middlegame Strategies**, the hedgehog is a challenging structure to play, particularly the estimation of space. A training complement to Sokolov material is **Beating the Hedgehog System** by Ivan-Gal & Hazai. Beating the Hedgehog System emerged as a Chessable course and the book is the printed version. In **Beating the Hedgehog System** the writers help the reader to develop the positional skills to successfully play against the hedgehog. For example, the authors explain the methods of active control against the d5 and b5 thematic black liberation pawn breaks. Importantly, the writers give a verbal explanation at the end of each suggested variation. The inclusion of words at the end of long variations helps the reader to understand what he needs to do next and the nature of his advantage. **Beating the Hedgehog System** is more than a traditional opening manual. It bridges an overlooked gap between opening study and middlegame play in the Hedgehog. **Beating the Hedgehog System** is worth the reader's time and effort, no doubt about it.

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In Passing...

We are sad to report the passing of friend and former FCA Board member, **Steve Cernobyl,** of South Florida. We have been informed that he passed away earlier this year. Thanks, Steve for all you did for chess in our state.

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CHESS CALENDAR

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May 27-29	2023 Florida Senior Championship	West Palm Beach, Florida	PBC
June 17-18	2023 Sunshine Open	Orlando, Florida	CFCC
July 8-9	North Florida Class Tournament	Jacksonville, Florida	JaxCC
July 15-16	2023 National Junior Chess Congress	Orlando, Florida	HCA

***Additional Tournament info at FloridaChess.org and ChessRegister.com**

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Magazine due dates: Summer - July 30, Fall - October 30, Winter - January 30

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FLORIDA STATE SENIOR CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP

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May 27-28, 2023

SECTIONS:
OPEN & U1600

THIS TOURNAMENT IS OPEN TO FLORIDA RESIDENTS AGED 50 AND ABOVE
CURRENT US CHESS MEMBERSHIP REQUIRED

THE TOURNAMENT IS LOCATED AT:

Boca Raton Library Spanish River Branch
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ROUNDS:
5 ROUNDS, GAME 70;d10
(70 MINUTES PER PLAYER WITH A 10 SECOND DELAY)

SATURDAY 5/27: ROUNDS 1,2,3: 9:30AM, 1:30PM, 4:30PM
SUNDAY 5/28: ROUNDS 4,5: 9:30AM, 1:30PM

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